

CHAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Forest is one of the most essential natural resources in Nepal. The main purpose behind developing the forest in Nepal is to meet the requirement of timber, fuel wood, fodder and minor forest products. Similarly soil protection, water conservation, wild life recreation and aesthetic values and maintaining ecological balance are environmental purpose. Forest provides 81 percent of the fuel consumption (as fuel wood) and more than 50 percent of the fodder for livestock. Forest has traditionally been used for cultural purpose. In recent years, some industries have been developed which use forest products as raw materials.

Forestry is the science, art and business of managing our forests in a sustainable way for all the multiple uses and values required by society for its social, biophysical and economic well-being. Moreover, it is the science, art and practice of understanding, managing and using wisely the natural resources associated with, and derived from forest lands. These resources include timber, water, fish, wildlife, soil, plants and recreation. The utilization of all of these resources as part of the cultural heritage and modern resources management embraces these values. Forestry starts with trees knowing how they grow and what part they play in the world as a whole. Forests affect how we live and provide many things we use. It is important to take care of them understand what they give us so, we can use them wisely. In simpler terms, the forestry profession focuses on caring of trees, soil, water, wildlife and other forest benefit, both for now and future generations. Forestry includes such diverse specialties as forest, wild life and fisheries and fine management, research and teaching, forest recreation, wilderness and watershed management, agro and urban forestry, policy and economics, communications, technology applications, genetics and environmental degradation.

Nepal is very rich in term of forest resources and bio-diversity. A broad range of ecosystem flourishes on relatively small area of land in Nepal. The forest resource has made a significant contribution to economic and social development of the country.

Besides, forests are indispensable as a life support system for women in the hills and mountains where agriculture, livestock and vegetation influence the ecology of the area and the lives of the local population (Shrestha, 2009).

Community forestry, as an approach based on collective action has been increasingly accepted as suitable approach for sustainable management and utilization of forest resources; particularly in developing countries like Nepal. It is a participatory approach that has involved as dominant priority policy of the government. Community forestry approach has been acclaimed as a pioneer strategy in the country and is appreciated all over the world. The aim of the community forestry to fulfill the basic need of local people together with sustainable management of forest resources of the country. It recognized the participation of local people as a mandatory pre-requisite for empowering people in the control and management of forest resources. Nepal's community forestry programme has proved to be a very encouraging endeavour in the development of a constructive partnership between the community forest users and the government. The CF is a bottom up approach where the grass root levels are involved to satisfy their daily need of forest product. Forest resources are major natural resources directly influencing the livelihoods of rural people in Nepal.

Community forestry programme is one of the highest priority programme of forestry sector in Nepal. This has been widely recognized as one of the best policy examples of developing natural resources management and use rights to local people (Agrawal and Ostram, 2001). To date, more than 1.1 million hectare of forested land (25 percent of the total) has been handed over to more than 13,000 Community Forest User Groups (CFUG) involving 1.4 million households (35 percent of total population) of Nepal (CFD, 2004). Its success has led to improved forest condition, generation of substantial financial income from the use and sale of forest products and creation of a large number of effective grass-root in institutions. Despite these successes, many studies have reported commonly the problems of social inequality and exclusion of the poor. Women and other disadvantaged groups from gaining access to and control over community forest resources and incentive derived from it (Graner, 1997: Agarwal, 2001, Rai and Buchy 2004 etc).

Community forest in Nepal was formally introduced in 1978. Community forest has been defined as the control, protection and management of local live forest by local communities known as user groups (Shrestha, 2009).

Community forestry, social forestry and rural development forestry are more or less equivalent and reflect Abraham Lincoln's view of democracy- "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

Community forestry in Nepal has become in the eyes of many, more than means of managing forests for environmental and economic benefits, but an important vehicle for social change empowering the marginalized people. With the shift in property rights from the state to communities, the community forest user groups (CFUGs) have been able to exercise a bundle of property rights over national forests namely access, use, management, and exclusion rights with some restriction. This is a major shift because local communities had only limited de jure access and use rights although they were managing forest products de facto.

Policy and legal instruments such as the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector 1988, the subsequent Forest Act 1993 and the forest regulation 1995 have provided a conducive environment for the successful handover of national forests to the local communities. . As a result, some 25 percent of the forest area has been handed over to more than 15,000 CFUGs encompassing 35 percent of the total population of the country (DOF, 2009). It is seen by international development agencies and governments as a tool for poverty reduction and sustainable natural resource management. In Nepal, CF is heralded as an appropriate instrument to help accomplish the poverty reduction goal of the country, as per the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper of 2002 and Million Development Goals (Kanel, 2004).

The concept of Forest User Group is the central focus of community forestry. The user group can be defined as a legally recognized group of people consisting of all members of a community that frequently use a particular forest area for various kinds of products or who has been using and managing forest area traditionally. The forest user group has to make consensus decision regarding the management and utilization of forest products (Gurung, 2004).

Forest provides most of the basic goods like timber, fuel wood, fodder and herbal medicines, it is a major revenue earner of the country, which contribute about 15 percent share of Gross Domestic Products. Nepal is one of the few countries in the world where people are to a large extent dependent on forest resources for their sustenance. It also generates livelihood assets like financial, human resources, social network etc to the local people who are dependent on it. The majority of people have to use forest products for shelter, food cooking, heating, livestock feed and for compost manure. It is best achieved by the development of the country's natural resources. Forest is one of the highly potential resources for the economic as well as livelihood development of the people in the country (Poudel, 2004).

Nepal's rural setting is the complex structure of social systems consisting of hierarchical social structure that includes different economic and social classes, oppressive castes system and gender discrimination which is developed from *fudal*, bureaucratic and cast and gender biased interests. Nepal's social structure is based on cast system with prevalent discrimination on gender and wealth. The differences between rich and poor people, upper and lower caste, men and women creates situations for social conflicts and discrimination to have access and control over the resources. Upper cast people have historically oppressed lower caste communities. Major problem being encountered in the community forestry programme arise from the lack of inclusion of poor, deprived communities and women in various activities of community forest management.

Participation in community forest management activities is the development on various social economic and bio-physical factors. Community forestry issues have now been associated with wider socio-economic, environmental and political concerns. Both women and man have their respective roles, responsibilities, opportunities and constraints in managing the natural resource based both within the household and community. Women involvement in forest products extraction for domestic household as well as farming purposes is quite important as they keep practical knowledge about forest and forest resources. However, it was only in the Eighth Five year plan (1992-1997) that strong emphasis was placed on women's participation in community forestry.

Women have very closer link with forest. They develop their livelihoods with the forest products. They collect fuel wood, fodder, timber from the forest and their products. But in the regular practices, male dominate in the decision making pattern. In other words male have played a major role in implementation process. In rare cases women also raise their question and provide suggestions on decision making process where forest and regulations also give the authority to women participation over the management process of community forestry.

In the context of the CF programme in Nepal women participation is not at satisfactory level because the voice of the poor and socially backward people are not heard and elite people capture the executive positions of the forest user group in managing forests and benefit sharing. Further more, the majority of the women, landless poor and disadvantage group remains silent observers and listeners of community forestry process.

Before 1957 there was no strict rule and regulation for protection and use of the forest. Believing that there was enough forest, the government paid no attention to developing the forest and allowed forest use to continue at higher rate. Forest rehabilitation was similarly ignored. So deforestation was created rapidly. To solve this problem, the government nationalized all forest to prevent the deforestation of national wealth to nationalize all forests for their adequate protection.

Unfortunately, the government was not prepared to assume the technical and administrative responsibilities of forest ownership. Villagers reacted negatively to nationalization, believing that their traditional rights of access and use had been curtailed and no one took responsibility of managing the forest resource. As a result, the forest was obviously depleting on steady pace. During 1978/79-1994, the forests have decreased at an annual rate of 0.5 percent (MOFSC/DOF, 1999). Since last few decades the country has been suffering from the consequences of deforestation. Depletion of forest coverage has invited to biological diversity, air and water pollution, and natural disasters.

After the negative experience of private forest nationalization act, government's legislative efforts have been sharply, directed toward forest resource management (FRM) to combat deforestation as well as environmental problems. The government

started to decentralize, which assigned the forest management to the local people as Panchayat Forest, Panchayat Protected Forest and subsequently, the community forest system. These initiatives controlled deforestation to some extent and reversed these negative attitudes (nobody's forest) to positive attitude (our forest).

Particularly, the community forestry approach streamlined the ordinary users and mobilized the women's involvement in community forest management. More specially, women started to involve in managerial aspect as executive committee member and silviculture aspect of the CF management. As a result, some 33,567 (21.5 percent) women have been working as executive committee member in different FUGs. Similarly, 4.83 percent FUGs are being handled by all women groups (DFO/CFD, 2003). However, the system could be effective only when the intended beneficiaries, particularly, the women get empowered and participated in all dimensions of the community forest management.

Women's participation in CF management itself is a complex managerial phenomenon. Generally, participation includes different dimensions such as decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation conflict management and benefit sharing process. Obviously, decision making process expects women's logical contribution in policy formulation, planning and designing, and right and responsibility in managerial aspects of CF management. Similarly, implementation process expects women's physical involvement in silvicultural aspects of CF management. Under monitoring and evaluation process women's analytical role is expectable in managerial and silvicultural activities. Likewise, equal/equitable sharing of benefits to be available from the CF is desirable under benefit sharing aspect.

Considering the multilateral significance of community forest (e.g subsistence, ecological balance etc) and vital role of women in CF management. This research was conducted to address some common issues in this regards. The research is related to the case of study of Ekkane chaur community forest user groups. This CF lies in ward number 7 and 8, Pakhapani Village development committee (VDC) of Parbat District, Nepal. This study focused on case studies concerning the women's participation. Such study is crucial for understanding of the success/failure of local level intervention at CF management. Such a study is useful for identifying the strength and weakness of

women's mobilization and management practices of local societies and for developing appropriate plan for future course.

The CF programme in Nepal has been observed to be successful since its implementation from 1978. "The community forestry programme is the protection and management of the forest by local people, where they use their forest products by community decision in the community".

People's participation has been an integral part of CF implementation since its introduction. The programme has welcomed the involvement of users in CF development processes through local actions. Indicators of the major issues of social equity and the participation of women within the forest user groups (FUGs) have been increasing over the history of the programme. Effective participation of individuals belonging to different economic classes, caste/ethnic groups and social identities can make differences in the overall CF development programme (Winrock, 2002).

The concept of CF programme came into existence with the central policy to "develop and manage forest resources through the active participation of individuals and communities to meet their basic needs" (The policy 2063/064).

The growth in the number of CFUGs over the last ten years in Nepal could be read as an example of effective scaling up to community based organizations. There is a widespread opinion that the community forest program of Nepal has been an effective example of community based on resource management and could become a model of community driven development. The total number of CF is about 1,219,272 ha and the number of FUG is 14,337 in Nepal till 2007, (CF Division, 2007).

The importance of forest in Nepal is often expressed by common saying "Hariyo Ban Nepal Ko Dhan." This literally means that green forest is the wealth of Nepal.

Till to date (01 September 2011) throughout the country 17685 FUGs have been formed, 1652654 ha of NF area have been handover to them and in CF 2177858 households are involved. (Database, 20011)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Women represent half of the population of Nepal but they are socially, economically disadvantaged in the society. In every aspects of life women are subordinate to male. Women in Nepal have limited access to market productive services, education, health care, bureaucracy, social service, decision-making and public affairs. Although women work much harder and for longer hours than man but their contribution to the national economy is not properly accounted yet. About 93 percent of the total populations of women in Nepal are involved in collection and use of firewood, fodder and household activities (CBS1993). In most Asian countries women spend significant portion of their time in forest related activities such as farming, collecting fuel wood and fodder, grazing animals, fetching water and cooking.

In the case of sustainable resources management, it is generally overlooked that women's indigenous knowledge is more than that of man in the aspect of identification and the proper use of species. Women have an important role to play in conservation and protection of forest in terms of their labor. With the exception of tree felling, most of the management activities i.e., planting, breeding, cleaning, thinning, singling etc. in CF conducted by the women. They can also know what type of fuel wood products that give less smoke and the type of palatable fodder plant etc. Most of development specialists realize that women can play a vital role in forest management but their heavy involvement in household chores, illiteracy and socio-cultural norms and values make them unable to participation in other development activities. Women are socialized into being silent tolerant, listeners and most invisible. Her duty is to serve, the elders and male member of the household. Their participation in public life is not encouraged and their mobility is controlled by males. Women are taught to subservient and their leadership qualities are discouraged.

Forest management by the local people has been successful in the rural areas of Nepal, where women participation has been a major agenda not just for forest preservation, but as means of empowering them. But in the present situation it has been realized that the concept of people's participation has become vague and insufficient to secure the access and inclusion of the people from all sector. Women involvement in the community forest is still surrounding by many questions. Therefore, it is necessary to scrutinize participation and equity issues in order to find

out the reality. Are women of different social and economic group participation user groups according to the government law? , Who are involved in the decision making process? , This is the critical issue in the community forest management. This situation has raised doubts on both the implementation of policy and the ability of women to effectively participate in community forest management. Beside these concerns there can be of her constraints which have an impact on women's participation in community forestry within a patriarchal society such as Nepal.

Since 1980s, the issue of gender participation has become the most highlighted issues in community forestry. In practice, we can see that the issues of equity are tied to those of gender. We have observed that high status, economically strong, elite and powerful women have easier access to the committee and community forestry. With women are getting increased opportunities as opposed to the targeted group of poor and otherwise marginalized women. Community forestry has still not effectively or sufficiently been heard or responded to the voice and choice of the poor and underprivileged women. In practice, the voices of the poor and so called low caste women have not been adequately addressed. In such situation, it seems to increase the economic strength and income generation activities of the poor people and of women. More priority should be given to women for the management of community forestry through participation.

This study further assesses various dimensions such as decision making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and benefit sharing aspects of women's participation, which was absent and/or poorly assessed in previous researches. Fundamentally, this research assessed women's participation in various dimensions based on their existing socio economic and cultural background. More specifically this study was concentrated on the following research problems or questions:

- What are the roles played by women in CF programme?
- Are women user involving equally in decision making, implementation, monitoring evaluation and benefit sharing process of community forest management?
- What is the level of women's participation?

- Does community forestry help women to access, utilize and mobilize forest resource management?
- What would be the men's role to enhance decision making role of women in forest management?
- Is there equitable participation of women from different caste/ethnic group in community forestry user groups committee?
- How far the decisions made by women had been implemented?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to assess women's participations in community forestry management of the study area. Specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- To assess women's participation in decision making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and benefit-sharing process of community forest management.
- To identify socio- cultural factors which hinder or facilitate the participation of women in decision making practices.
- To assess the factors influencing women's participation in CF.

1.4 Limitations and Scope of the Study

This is a small scale study conducted to fulfill the requirements of the Master's Degree of Sociology/ Anthropology. As such, the researcher was unable to present more than the information essential to the scope of the study. The limitations of the study are:

This study has limited time and budget. As a result of these limitations, the generalizations made may herein not be applicable to other parts of Nepal. This study might not reflect the situation and consequences of all the community forest user groups of the district and might not to generalized for other case of CF management.

This study deals with women's participation in community forest management. The study was limited only Ekkane chaur community forest forestry in Parbat District. The study is intended to complete within time frame of the requirement of Tribhuvan University.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This study is presented in the sequential flow of acknowledgement, table of contents, list of maps and chapters. It has been organized in five different chapters.

Chapter first covers introductory portion including background, statement of the problems, objectives of the study and limitations and scope of the study.

Chapter second mainly deals the review of literature where all possible relevant information's was consulted and finding of the similar types of research have been cited. This chapter deals on the literature reviewed by the researcher related to the community forest for the upliftment of disadvantaged groups in the Nepalese society. Regarding the literature review a number of published and unpublished different reports and other books have been consulted to precede this research. The conceptual framework and review of previous studies also have been included in this chapter.

Chapter third explains methodology including population, sample size and technique research design, nature and source of data, tools and techniques of data collection and analysis of data collection.

Chapter four describes the data presentation and analysis, setting of the study area, discussions including general characteristics of the respondents.

Chapter five includes summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study. Likewise, the last part of the research report covers Bibliography and Appendices.

1.6 Rational of the Studies

Nepalese women can play vital role and contribute to manage natural resources, development and its conservation, which ultimately leads to the national development of the country. In the Nepalese context, rural women are the real users of the forest resources. Therefore, their involvement and contribution in the CF management

process need to be recognized and properly incorporated into the CF management policies and strategies. Different development initiatives are paying focus on women's participation in FRM. The role of women in forestry activities is very important because they are: i) widely acknowledged as primary user of forest. ii) More than half of the population of Nepal occupied by women. iii) Heavily involved in household activities including collection of firewood from the forest (about 93% women contributing about 66% of their time in collecting firewood energy, more engaged in day to day household activities). We should not ignore women to involve in any kind of forestry activities. That is why this study concerns whether there is actual participation of women or not in community forest management.

This study basically considers the socio economic status of the study areas. Moreover, it explains different dimensions of women's participation in CF management. Under socio economic situation caste, literacy, land holding size, occupation, food sufficiency, live-stock raising and housing pattern etc. are discussed in detail.

This study explains the problems associated women's participation in CF management activities, accessibility of forest product to the women to contribute for upliftment of their economic condition in the society. Besides this, the study also suggests some of the areas within the existing frame to be strengthened. At first place this study helps to the planner and implementers to review and re-think on the situation.

CHAPTER-TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter covers rationale literature review for this study. Literature review of different studies has been conducted regarding community forest in Nepal by native and foreign researchers as well as articles and publications are viewed to synchronize the objectives of this study. This helps to outline the objectives and purpose of the study. This section deals mainly with historical background of the forest management in Nepal, definition of community forestry, women participation, policies, review of previous studies, conceptual and theoretical review etc.

2.1 Historical Background of Forest Management in Nepal

Forest protection and management by the local people has a long history in Nepal, although institutional arrangements for participatory forest management were not democratic and transparent in those days. In most part of country, the forests were under the control of the local élites. The forest in the mid hills of Nepal had been controlled by local landlords, who were loyal to the king or ruler, who had been granted the right for management of the forest. There was varied tenure system forest management in different area of Nepal. One of the main tenure system was *birta* system, the local landlords had the responsibility to manage the forest and granted rights to use the forest to local households. Although timber extraction was regulated local people generally had free access to non-commercial forest products. The temporary forest plots are also used for shifting cultivation or *Khoriya* was widespread in conjunction with *birta* tenure, there was *talukdari* system, of forest management. Under the *talukdari* system, in the early 20th century it becomes the responsibility of particular landlords to protect and manage the forest through *talukdars* (local revenue functionaries). Under the *kipat* system of communal tenure local people were allowed to collect forest products and local head man (*jimmawals*) was recognized as the tax collectors and de facto owners of the forest lands. The influence of the *jimmuwals* has persisted although their legal roles effective ended in the early 1970A.D. *Kipat* system was in existence in the eastern Nepal. *Guthi* (religious) forest was also prevalent in some parts of Nepal held under the tenure of a religious institution.

The government of Nepal established the Department of forest in 1942AD under the advice of the Indian Forest Service with vested interest of exploiting the valuable Terai forests. Prior to 1957AD, there was sufficient forest in Nepal in comparison of total population. The government stressed to convert forest land in to agricultural land.

In 1957 AD the Government enacted the private forests Nationalization Act of 1957 and nationalized all the private forests, which helped partly to break the feudal power structures. There act trans fined most of the department of forest land to the state under the control of the department of forest. The government further developed the Forest Acts to manage the forest resources in subsequent years. But due to insufficient DOF capacity to assumes management of Mid-hills Forests, the government could not effectively implement the forest Act 1961 AD and the later 1967 AD Forest protection Act. As a result, the deforestation rate increased which led a lack of effective regulation of forest product eructation.

Due to nationalization of the forest it shifted the perception of the local people from the "*people forest*" to "*government forest*" there by eliminated the indigenous system of the forest management. As a result, it led to serious problems like deforestation, degradation and encroachment. The lack of local incentive for restraint and the resentment against nationalization from influential local elites was leading to unregulated extraction, encroachment. This created a conflicting relationship between local people and the DOF. This began to deforest the forest land in an alarming rate and threaten the sustainability of forest resources of Nepal. Of similar significance for the condition and extent of the forests was the cadastral surveys, which demarcate land ownership and land boundaries for tax assessment purpose the uncertainties and opportunities widely deal to forest encroachment and clearance. HMG of Nepal and DOF staff gradually recognized short comings of the prevailing exclusionary model of forest management. Bilateral and multilateral donors, including the World Bank pushed for reform of the forestry record from the 1970 AD onwards in the 1980 AD the DOF and bilateral, projects promoted community forestry initiatives the situation changed dramatically following the abolition of the *panchayat* after the 1990 AD revolution since when a range of new approaches have been adopted (DOF report 2001).

Community forestry is a policy meant for the benefit of the poor by bringing about social change and establishing efficient institutions at the local level. CF is “any situation which intimately involves local people in forestry activity”(FAO1997). CF is a community oriented forest management system where local users of the forest control, manage and utilize forest resources for their own benefits. The ultimate objective of CF is to raise standard of living of the local community (FAO1989).

Community forestry is “a part of national forest handed over to a user group under specific rule and regulation for its development, conservation and utilization for collective benefits”. Community forestry is thus the management, control and utilization of accessible forest resources by the local people (Gov, Forest Act, 1993).

Community forest is such a forest, which is handed over to the definite groups of people (CFUGs) who hold the traditional right for the purpose of management, protection and utilization with their own approved forest operational plan. Hence the CF practices considered CFUGs as the real managers of their forest where user group organize their activities in a way, which will assist them in meeting their own needs from the forest (Branney, 1994 cited Bist, 2004). Annually they harvest forest products, protect the forest, implement the activities to the forest and monitor the forest condition.

Community forest in Nepal is not a new subject because indigenous forest management system was practiced since long time ago only new things are that it has documented properly later. If we see the natural resources Conservation and management tradition in hills it gives clear information about the protection and management (Thakur, 2001).

2.2 Situational Review

Nepal’s population mentioned in the 2001 census is 50.1 percent female and 49.9 percent male. More than 90 percent of the population lives in rural areas. About 90.5 percent women are engaged in agriculture as against 74.9 percent of men. Women have extensive workloads with dual responsibility far from and household’s production. Women play an active role in livestock production and forest resource use and their work is getting harder and more time consuming due to ecological degradation. Several other studies related with community forestry in Nepal have

shown that village women spend a large part of their time in forest related activities such as farming, collecting fuel wood, fodder leaf litter, grazing animals, fetching water and cooking food.

Most developing specialists recognize that forest plays a significant role in rural women's life and rural women play a vital role in forest resource management. However, at the early stage of emergency of community forestry, women's participation on this sector as well as other development sector was neglected. In this context "Though women in rural areas are directly dependent on forestry related resources many forestry projects are designed without any recognition of the impact the proposed activity will have on them."

About 39 percent of the country's area is under forest coverage while that under agriculture is about 20 percent. The 11 percent of the forest land is in a degraded, state while another 26 percent has less than 40 percent crown cover. From 6.4 Million ha in 1964, the total forest area is estimated to have declined to 5.3 million ha by 1985. About 0.2 million ha. of the Terai and siwaliks forests were cleared through planned settlement and illegal filling between the 1950s and 1985.

Because of deforestation and its detrimental impact on the lives of the Nepalese people the government has tried to stem the problem of deforestation by introducing the community forestry programs.

Women of rural Nepal have a very close relationship with forest. Collecting fuel wood meet for 85 percent of the cooking energy consumption. Women have traditionally and primarily performed the tedious and tiring job of collecting fodder and other forest products. Women's task of raising cattle requires a great deal of daily care the whole year around. An improved buffalo eats about two head loads of fodder per day, besides prepared feed. The women spend more than three-fourths of house hold time in collecting forest products.

In all the localities of the mountain region of Nepal, women are the most needy of forest products and hence the major collectors of forest products. The community forestry operational guidelines issued by the Nepalese government in 1990 was probably the first forestry document, which specifically mentioned the role of women in the decision making process. It stipulated that one-third of the forest users

committee members should be women. This is in contrast to Nepal's master plan for the forestry sector 1988-2010, which indicates strong gender biases and only emphasizes women's involvement in family planning programmes. However, the guidelines mention little about participation by disadvantaged groups. Other official guidelines on handing-over procedures of community forests have not clearly addressed gender/social equity issues either. Women's concerns are still seen an additional issue.

Community forestry has evolved as one of the major components of Nepal's forest development strategy over the course of the past 25 years. In the late 1970s, social or community forestry evolved as a means to improve forest lands by addressing the issues of the people's livelihoods.

Forest is important natural resources for rural development in terms of forest products for supporting livelihoods of the rural people, regulation of atmospheric conditions, and maintenance of bio-diversity in Nepal. However the forest has been the most threading resources due to encroachment by different development activities such as the expansion of agriculture, urbanization, roads etc. which has affected not only on diminishing of bio-diversities but also on decreasing productivity level of agriculture and causing hardship in livelihood practices. The government policies have accorded high priority to conserve, develop and planning of the forestry through adopting different measures. However, some of the forestry programmes have ignored their possible side effects, particularly on the livelihood pattern. In Nepal, the basic problem is to use of the existing data sources with no ways for the analysis for forest resources as the information has been generated by different methods.

Community forestry was introduced in Nepal in 1978. The community forestry approach has been highly successful for protection of forests in the hills of Nepal. The local user groups/ communities are responsible for the control, protection, bottom up planning and sustainable use of forest resources. Under this program, one million-hectares of forest land have been handover to the community, up to 12,000 user groups, representing 1.4 million households in March 2003. Women are also the active users and members of most of the community forests. There are about 560 women user groups. Thus, women are providing an important role in sustainable development of community forests. However, their role in community forestry for its

sustainable development. It also highlights the constraints on maximum female participation in community forestry and focuses on possible ways for solving the problems faced by women in community forestry.

According to the new forest policy of 1990s, any part of forest can be handed over to local community for its management, conservation and utilization in which land is still owned by government and trees are owned by community. The community has full authority to control over resources and to decide conservation, management and utilization plan. All the revenues and benefits derived from the community forest go to the community fund community can decide income and expenditures for the various rural development purposes without any approval of local authorities.

2.3 Concept of People's Participation

“Participation”: Organization + Empowerment + Contribution = Peoples Participation

The word participation became public in the development sector after the Second World War. During late 1960s and early 1970s, some development models (such as “growth in income” and “growth in social progress”) failed to reach poor and disadvantaged population in countries like Nepal. The increasing poverty and growing dissatisfaction among the large number of people in the society, and the failure of development initiatives forced development experts, planners and policy-makers to re-examine the understanding of development. As a result, realization of people's participation emerged (Regmi, 2002). After this concept, people's participation started and increased in various development projects/programs. Participation was expected from those people, who bear the consequences of success and failure of any development initiatives in their vicinities, as their right to involve.

Participation is a process that includes even poor and disadvantaged people in the development process. In this process all the people engage actively in all stages of development activities, such as need identification, planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and benefit sharing (Regmi, 2002), which strengthens the capacity of individuals and communities. In this way, dependence on the state and other development agencies is minimized and ordinary people rediscover their potential for co-operation and mutual endeavor.

As the development of concept of people's participation, various approaches were adopted experienced regarding the issues of women's involvement in development process. These approaches perceived women as passive recipients of development fruits/passive participant, active participation and recognized as social change agents respectively. These approaches are reviewed as:

The During 1950s-1970s, the women in development (WID) approach emerged that encouraged women to integrate in development activities, reduce suppression and equal participation and improvement of life of women. The WID emphasized productive aspects of women's equal role in the development of education, employment and health services. Likewise, women and development (WAD) approach emerged in late 1970s, paid more attention to appreciation and recognition of women's contribution, who have always been active participants in development. The gender and development (GAD) approach emerged during the late 1980s recognized the importance of social, economic and political agents of actors in women's lives. The GAD is concerned with social construction (social relation between men and women) of gender equity and social justice. The GAD acknowledges women as agents of change rather than passive recipients of development services.

Along with WID, WAD and GAD approaches and women's experiences such as the Chipko movement, greenbelt movement, women for peace movement, and eco-feminist movement, "The women and environmental development (WED)" approach emerged. Eco-feminist action is aimed at the preservation of the life present and future generations, in a human perspective and in a wide biological and cosmic perspective. The WED approach covers a variety of areas including forestry, agriculture, irrigation and water systems. The WED includes women's relationship between harmful effects of environmental degradation and women's lives. The WED approach seems most relevant one because it is based on experiences and strengths of grassroots level women.

2.4 Forest Management Practices and People's Participation in the Global and Nepalese Context

Forest is the major natural resource of the world. The forest is also called mother of nature. Various environmental consequences such as ozone layer depletion, global warming, acid rain, loss of bio-diversity etc. are emerging with the depletion of forest resources, international community has emphasized in forest resource management.

Like in the Europe and America, forest protection with the involvement of local people initiated since 1980s in south Asia. For example, under the joint forest management (JFM) in India, the degraded forests were given to communities for management and regeneration. Similarly, in Africa (Gambia and Tanzania), attention was shifted to community-based natural resource management. The emerging trend in Africa was to support the custodial interest of the forest-adjacent community.

Involvement of communities in forest management is now a significant feature of national forest policies and practice throughout the world. Governments of various countries are increasingly decentralizing and turning to local communities to assist them in protecting and managing state-owned forests. Governments of various countries have supposed greater reliance on resources at community levels as a potential solution to a growing resource problem (FAO, 2001). Community based management system is as major challenge in many places due to little experience in collaborative management particularly in mobilization of people in decision-making and implementation at local level.

Obviously, forest has been the major natural resources in our country, which is supplying fuel wood for consumption, fodder for livestock, timber for construction and other non-timber products. As a part of economy and livelihood, the forest is being managed by giving high priority from both user and the state. Level of people's participation varies according to the nature of forest management practice adopted. Forest practices are adopted in Nepal by Various ways.

Conservation awareness and tradition of preserving of forest adjacent to place of worship or important source of water is deep-rooted Nepalese societies. Various traditional systems of resource administration have also evolved during the period.

For example, Shingo nawa (forest caretaker) was practiced in Sherpa society. Such indigenous systems were based on need of local people. Spontaneously, they appointed Forest Watchers from their sources. Later, in eastern hills the *Kipat* system for commercial rights over large areas and *Chitaidar* (local non-official functionaries) were responsible for the use of village forest.

During Licchivi period *Panchali*, a local authentic body, allowed people to harvest trees and other non-timber products for domestic purposes. However, trading and levying taxes of fauna, wood products and herbs were controlled by the state. During Malla period and later, forests were also preserved and used for security (strategic) purpose. The policy of strategic use of forest was continued up to the period of Prithivi Narayan Shah and afterward also. Later, King Ram Shah (Gorkha) promulgated provisions requiring people to maintain trees along the path or foot trails. More specifically he provisioned as “Maintain trees around water springs, in the absence of trees, water will not last all through the year and the spring will run, dry. If forests are cleared on a massive scale, there will be massive landslides will bring flood, that could wash away even Khet and forests. Thus fine rupees five who cuts trees around water resources”. (Bhattarai, 2001). Provision mention above, indicates necessary attention was paid to forest as well as environmental management.

With the dawn of democracy in the country, government standard to manage natural resources, especially the forest resources. Major interest towards the forest was its multilateral benefit for local user as well as state. After a half decade of democracy, the government started planned systematic interventions by formulating different Acts, in order to manage the forest available in the country. Major Acts are pointed out in this study as:

Initially, the government formulated “Private Forest Nationalization Act 1957,” and controlled all private forest, which were provided to people for the protection, with a view to preserving this important natural resource. The Act was guided by the democratic idea of providing for a more equitable distribution of this wealth among the people of the nation. However, due to development and other institutional constraints, forest area neither could established adequate control over forest nor mobilized people properly. As a result, the need to involve local people and committee in the forest conservation and management activities was recognized.

A rule regarding CF was enacted as the ‘Panchayati Forest (PF)’ in 1978 and ‘Panchayat Protected Forest (PPF)’ in 1988 by the HMG/N. However, only degraded forestlands were provided. On the other hand, community forests were registered on the basis of Panchayat territory that could not include the real user, who was utilizing the forest from the next Panchayat.

With the evolution of the forest Act (1993) community forestry come as new approach in forestry development, which enhanced people’s participation and ensured the utilization, conservation and management of local forest under respective community. The Act classified the whole national forest of the country in to five categories such as government-managed forest, protected forest, community forest, leasehold forest and religious forest. Among these, CF has been changed in to successful and well-established forest these days.

Based on forest management practices described above, we can say that various indigenous forest management practices were generated spontaneously, as a result of continuous interaction to the forest resource management in order to collect revenue. Due to bureaucratic intervention from the state and lack of people’s participation, the forest began to deteriorate at steady rate. After long negative experiences at the local level and policy level, and evolution of participatory forest management practices at global level, led to community forestry management practice and people’s participation in Nepal.

2.5. Women’s Participation in Community Forestry

Women's involvement in natural resource management will be evaluated through the following indicators

- Women's participation in resource management in terms of decision making, meeting, extension, motivation and local organization.
- Women trainees and employment
- Change in literacy rate of women
- Change in women's income, expenditure and saving
- Change in time spent by women in firewood collection, domestic and farm activities.

Women's actions from the local village to the global policy making arenas are a driving force for change. From 1975 United Nations (UN) International year of women through the decade of women (1976-1985) and the global conferences and summits of the 1990 , women participated actively to shape economic, social, political and sustainable development. Throughout the 1990's, women's organization struggle to put gender on the global policy agenda at key Un international conferences, including the UN conference Environment and Development(Rio 1992).The international conferences on Human Rights (Vienna Austria 1993), the international conference on Population and Development (Cairo Egypt 1994) and the fourth world conference on women (Beijing China 1995). At the 2000 UN Millennium submit 191 governments reaffirmed their commitment to women's empowerment and adopted the Millennium declaration agreeing to " Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and diseases and stimulate development that is truly sustainable" . The declaration also addresses " The equal rights and opportunities of women and men and pledges to combat all form of violence against women and to implement the convention of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (Pearl 2003).Some International agreements emphasizing and supporting the importance of woman's participation in forestry too. The principle 2007 Rio Declaration is stated that " Women have a vital role in environmental management and development and their full participation” is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development. In the forest principles it is started that " the full participation of women in all aspects of forests should be actively promoted"(UN 2005). Women's participation in community forestry is important for the empowerment and equity issues. Culture and tradition, access to resources and capital government policy and extension poverty, illiteracy service are the affecting factors of women's participation in community forestry (Khanal, - 2008).

Forest Act, 1993 defines “Community forest means a national forest handed over to user group (pursuant to section 25) for its development, conservation and utilization for collective interests.” The act has given priority to the CF as “National Forest suitable to handover to the users groups as CF shall not be handed over as Leasehold Forest.” Similarly, the act has provided major status and role to the FUG. The FUG is a registered group in District Forestry Office (DFO). The user group is an autonomous corporate body having continuous session. Hence, it can prepare work plan for the

development and conservation of the forest and utilizing selling and distributing the forest products by maintaining the environmental balance.

The CF approach has streamlined the users in FRM at local level. By following its unique philosophy, women came in front line regarding FRM in different parts of the country. First of all, women of 29 households of Balthali VDC of Kavrepalanchok district formed all women FUG and managed 2.9 hectares of land in Bisthodhar Pakha as CF at 046 B.S., In 047 B.S., an all women FUG of Chhahara Siureti, Bokhim VDC of Bhojpur district, undertake 11.9 ha forest for management. Successively, the rate of formation of all women FUG and women member in mixed group increased significantly. Women have managed smallest (0.22 ha in Badikhel, Lalitpur) to biggest (527 ha in Budhabare, Dhankuta) CFs as their needs and managerial capacity.

A study conducted in the mid-western development region of Nepal by Pandey (1997) shows that representation of women in the EC was nil in seven FUGs and found to be only marginal in others except all women group. Similarly, Adhikari (2000) concludes in his study that CF is as a successful FRM initiative with the management of FUGs. From gender perspective, involvement and participation of women in the planning and decision making forum of CF programs were found to be minimal. CF program cannot be successful as expected if a present trend of women's low participation continues.

Number of studies has been conducted in different part of Nepal looking at women's participation in forest management. On the basis of previous studies, we can say that women are the real users and managers of the forest resources. Trends of women's involvement and capability have been increasing in CF management. Except some successful examples, they need support from men and forestry institution. Present study area, there is not conducted any study focusing purely on women's participation. So it is expected that, this study will fulfill the gap of the study.

Although it is well known that women in Nepal play a major role in forest management, it has proven difficult to ensure their participation in decision-making activities. Exclusion of women/men from decision-making process is one of the limiting factors of gender equality in CF.

Recognizing District Forest Office and foreign aid funded agencies have supported to promote women-only user group formation where general body and executive committee are made up of women only. A quick glance at the national level database show that 24 percent of the CFUG committee members are women and there are more than 600 women-only CFUGs (CFD, 2004). The importance of women's participation in CF, Forestry Policy has made mandatory provision for at least 50 percent of women representation in Executive Committee (EC). Moreover, although CF policy has emphasized inclusion of all the concerned groups and stakeholders including women in the mainstream of community forestry, the translation of policy into practice has several implications.

2.6 Theoretical Review

(a) Common property Resources Management Perspective

This perspective is particularly important for integrated resource management planning and for integrated economic programmes. Common properties should be used sustainably considering the future of coming generation. The common property resource perspective shares two important characteristics first, exclusion (control of access) of users to the resource is problematic. Secondly, each user is capable of subtracting from the welfare of other users. The resources are utilized commonly by the users. Common property resources perspective does not mean that a group owns the resources collectively; it means it is not owned by anyone. Resources are basically open access and freely available to any user. In the case of community forestry, which exists as common property of the community users, the participation of users at different management levels is vital for the success of the programme. The exclusion of vulnerable poor from the management process may create tension and conflict. Community forestry in Nepal stood as the common property of the users of the community, the users think that community forestry a resource belongs to them and thus they will have to preserve its resources. But contrary to this, common ownership may lead to negligence and apathy on the part of the users at various levels of participation in their community forestry resources management practices. At the same time common property are compounded by the external effects notably erosion and other human malpractices that accompany overuse of forest. (Upadhyay, 2004)

b) A Common-Pool Resource

A common-pool resources (CPR), alternatively termed a common property resource is a particular type of good consisting of a natural or human made resources system, the size or characteristics of which makes it costly, but not impossible, to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use. Unlike pure public goods, common pool resources face problems of congestion or overuse, because they are subtractable. A common-pool resource typically consists of a core resource, which defines the stock variable, while providing a limited quantity of extractable fringe units, which defines the flow variable, while the core resource is to be protected or entertained in order to allow for its continuous exploitation, the fringe units can be harvested or consumed. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, 2007)

Common pool resources include irrigation systems fishing grounds, pastures and forests. A pasture allows for a certain amount of grazing to occur each year without the core resource being harmed. In case of excessive grazing, however, the pasture may become more prone to erosion and eventually yield less benefit to its users. Their core resource being vulnerable, common-pool resources are generally subject to the problems of congestion, overuse, pollution and potential destruction unless harvesting or use limits is devised and enforced.

Common –Pool Resources may be owned by national, regional or local governments as public goods, on communal groups as common property resources or by private individuals or corporations as private goods. When they are owned by no one, they are used as open access resources of common pool resources having observed a number of common pool resources throughout the world, Elinor Ostrom noticed that a number of them are governed by common property regimes arranged based on self management by a local community. Her observations are partly in contradiction with the assumption that common-pool resources would eventually face destruction in the long run due to collective action problems leading to the overuse of the core resources predicted on the tragedy of the commons. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, 2007)

c) **Participatory Theories**

It is sure that "development without popular participation can be best be an incomplete affair (Yadav, 1978). Although there is Rome consensus about its meaning i.e. people's participation in plan formulation, implementation, feedback evaluation, conflict management and benefit sharing, there is lack of clear thinking of its practical application. Any type of development scheme people matter because it is for their welfare that such programmes are implemented. Yet very often people may be passive as they may wrongly think that development is the job of the government. Schemes can be successful only when people take an active part in them. Unless local people have a stake in their own development programme, it is unlikely to be sustainable. In short, the participation of beneficiaries can be understood in terms of participation in *decision making, implementation of development programmes monitoring and evaluation of the programme and sharing the benefit of development-* (Sundaram, 2002). Peoples involvement ensure strict supervision at the cutting edge of level of administration. Local people always used to be in a better position to know about their needs and priorities and this can avoid duplication, minimize delay and ensure easy accountability. As a result of participation, the people will be in a better position to access their own rights and responsibilities.

Participatory development is important for sound resource management. However this kind of development required of more flexible and evolving process to planning for change, and poses new challenges for decision makers and evaluators alike. In particular, this requires major institutional reorientation at the policy level to ensure responsiveness to local demand and to empower and enable communities to act. Experiences shows that people often neglect process issues, often in order to concentrate on their task. However both task and process will suffer if they are split from each other. Because task and process are participation is a word that is very closely related to local people's obligation and sincerity. In fact popular participation is to be commended as it places obligation on people. The participation related to decision making, participation in benefits of growth and implementation of strategies in the work of development. Participation brings dignity and story to the local people, participation in development related activities reserves their special place among the common mass. It denotes talking in view local people's ideas and values. The objectives of people's participation can be 1) Better planning and implementation or

rural development programmes. (2) Mobilization of additional resources (3) Empowering the people, particularly the poor to play an effective role. (Sundaram,2002).

In Nepal, community forestry aims at making local people the manager of their forest and to share knowledge with government officials regarding the resource management. It is where the issues are supposed to have their upper hand in the total utilization of their skill and knowledge for the better management of community forestry resources. Master plan for forestry of Nepal has aimed to entrust the protection, management and utilization of the forest user groups via a phased handling overall accessible forests to them to the extent that they are able and willing to manage them (Ministry of forestry and soil conservation, Nepal, 1998). The main focus is on seeking people's participation for the success of community forestry programme. Community Forestry resource management practice had been taken as "Oratory" which is not a good prediction. It ought to focus on making community forestry participation more real and practical which is not so in real life. The issue of interesting distinction between "participation" as a means "and participation as an end " in community forestry in Nepal requires little more attention to be paid on the part of anthropology. The variable of participation related activities are (i) rate of economic growth (ii) employment (iii) income distribution (iv) delivery system. If a country has simultaneously manipulated these four variables, it must have achieved high degree of people's participation in all kind of development activities. Participation thus, in community forestry resource management practices has to be understood at different levels. (a) Participation in decision making e.g. identification of priorities and planning (b) Participation in the implementation of programme and project (c) Participation in benefit sharing and (d) participation in monitoring and evaluation of programme.

2.7 Review of the Previous Studies

Many research works and studies have been carried out in the field of community forestry. Consequently several papers and report have frequently been presented and published in this regard. But the Studies about women's issue in community forestry are limited like other sectors. Some NGOs and scholars including students of Institute of forestry have done studies in the aspects of women and natural resource

management as well as gender issue in community forestry. They have however pointed out the importance of women's participation in decision making to effectively implement the CF programmes. Even though there are a lot of papers elaborating women's roles in forest management, very less studies have been carried out to assess the decision making role of women in community forestry.

After the restoration of democracy in 1990, forest Act 1993 was promulgated. It gave more authority to the local users in making decisions regarding forest protection and management. Between 1975 and 1995, Nepal attended all four world conferences on women and committed itself to the enlistment of women by giving more rights and access to resources. In the mean time, there had been efforts made to train women foresters to make forestry extension more women friendly. As a result, the user groups formed after 1990s had more women in the user groups than before. The first community forestry user group comprising only of women was made in Balthali VDC in Kavre district in 1990s. This group took charge protecting and managing 2.9 ha of forests. The second women group was formed after a year in Kokhim VDC of Bhojpur district. In the following years this trend went on increasing. In 1998, there were 82 groups of women users formed. The biggest groups so far are in Gorkha district with 883 households and the smallest has only 11 households. Out of 13,360 forest user groups formed so far, 674 are women only groups. From a numerical point of view, this number may look very small, however, gauging from social point of view, this must be taken as a big leap in women participation in community forestry. It must be noted that there are nearly 35,000 women at leadership position.

A study conducted in the eastern Koshi hills of Nepal reported that in all forest user groups' women appear to be fully involved in collecting forest products. However there in decision making within the forest user groups is very low. Participation of women is found to be significant only those forest user groups, which are exclusively managed by them. In other forest user groups, women either did not attend committee meetings and group assemblies or participated passively. When asked about their non participation, it was established that the women's lack of involvement in over-all planning and forest management was because of the domination of men in meeting and the decision making process.

A study conducted in the Tungan sub water shed of the Lalitpur district shows that out of the 24 community forest user groups, women's representation as forest chairperson is only one forest user committee (4 percent) that is exclusively formed by women.

Rural women confront obstacles that limit their ability to participate in community development programs. They frequently lack the self confidence or a forum in which to speak up publicly for themselves and for families. They often lack access to child care, credit, education and land tenure, which limits them more than it limits the men of their own families. These obstacles prevent them from being heard and from achieving a more powerful role in accessing and making decisions about tree and forest resources management (FAO, 1989).

The knowledge of women regarding forests can be gauged when forest department staffs were initially quite surprised to find that men were ill-informed as to the exact amount of fuel and fodder required by village HHs and its local availability in the surrounding forest, "Ask my wife," was a common reply to such questions, which were usually directed by a male extension worker to the male head of the households.

Despite the emphasis of policy guidelines, the involvement and participation of women in the community forestry programmes, during the planning and decision making process is very low. Although the overall participation of women in the forest user groups is low and disproportionate to men there are many more active and successful female headed off dominated user groups.

Due to the women's knowledge about forest it has been realized that for the sustainable development and the management of community forests, women's participation is indispensable. Women's knowledge of forest is often found to be both qualitatively and quantitatively different from that of the men. Fortman (1986) argues their extensive and closed contact with the forest gives local women a more detailed understanding of forest resource than local men. As observed by Shrestha (1989), although fuel wood and fodder collection is not exclusive the responsibility of women they have better knowledge about the burning qualities of different varieties of fuel wood as well as the nutrient values of various fodder species.

Most women in rural areas are aware of the relationships that exist between their deteriorating living conditions and deforestation. Therefore they do not have to be made conscious regarding the need for forests. What they do need is information on possibilities of improving forest productivity through applied or improved technology. For long, women have been capable of choosing options that tender an optimum income. They will be reactive of alternatives shown to them that will make their work easier and /or that will improve their income.

The board based development approaches initiated by the Tenth Five Year Plan Strategy (2003) has discussed community forestry from the perspective of women's empowerment through their leadership in the management of community forests.

A study conducted in the Patle CFUG, Lamatar VDC-1, Lalitpur district shows that the CFUG and Executive Committee are not found to be gender sensitive. These women still need more awareness and empowerment in terms of education. Women cannot put forward their views in any public sector. In addition to caste discrimination, gap between poor and rich, the patriarchal structures of Nepali society are the key features that ever keep women away from the decision making practice. Women have limited access to participation in decision making practice at CFUG level. So, inclusion of women is necessary in different sectors for their capacity building in the decision making. This is mainly because domestic contribution of the women in Nepal is overlooked (Dhital, 2009).

Women can play a significant role in community forest development, protection and management. Hence, success of the CFUGs largely depends upon degree of women's participation in its management from the very beginning. Women's participation in CF management was greatly determined by various factors like bio-physical situation of CF, socio-economic and cultural practices, institutional culture of the EC, government's forestry policy, extension efforts of forestry organizations, perception and altitude towards CF and allied issues, and status of women in the family and society. Women's participation as executive committee members and their presence in regular meeting were found good but their participation in discussion was found passive. Participation of ordinary women was found very low in decision making process (Gurung, 2009).

Community forest is one of the natural resources; it provides different types of forest resources to rural people to maintain their livelihood. They are fodder, timber, firewood, poles, fencing poles, bedding materials etc. Rural people need those forest resources for fulfillment their basic needs in their everyday life (Rai, 2008).

Women have been the prime managers of the natural resources from the time immemorial. They have made great contribution in plantation, weeding, pruning and thinning activities of forest resource management. They are the responsible person for the collection of firewood, fodder, leaf-litter and so on for their livelihood. In addition, especially, in the rural areas, commercially valuable products such as medicinal plants, fruits, nuts, mushroom etc. are mainly collected by women (Banjade, 2003).

In rural areas, Indigenous women have much knowledge about forest resources such as fuel wood, fodder and medicinal herbs because women are the main collectors of these products. They have an indigenous knowledge about forest resources and its efficient use. Indigenous women exploit several different forests and numerous area within the forests. They travel from low hills to high forests as far as six hours walk above their village. During spring and autumn season, women go to the lower forests, visiting higher forests in the winter, not only to collect firewood, fodder, food and herbs, which are almost solely a women's responsibility, but also to cut Nigalo, the bamboo group, for men in the village to work with. Thus, rural indigenous women have the knowledge of identification of species, knew species name, its uses, geographic location, reasonability and availability and conservation of the natural resources (Sherpa, 2004).

Bio-diversity is new area in community forestry. The program does not have any activities that directly contribute to bio-diversity as such. These results have happened, not by intension, but by practice. The people, the user groups started protecting the forest. As a result we get protection of all species. It has been shown that with good protection, original forest can return.

A study conducted in the Janachahana CF, Chandranigahapur, Rautahat District shows that participation of women in implementation process was found high. Male's influences in decision making in the family, requirements of forest productions to

women, and tendency of giving less response to social works, prevailed in the community are the reasons for it. In aggregate, participation of both sexes in monitoring and evaluation process was found poor in the CFUG. Particularly, Women's participation was observed rather poor in M&E aspect; due to lack of strong provision of regular monitoring and evaluation in the operational plans of FUG, lack of knowledge on women in this regard (Khadka, 2004).

A study conducted in the Pragati CF of Khadaka Bhadrakali VDC of Kathmandu District shows that Women's hesitation due to being uneducated, lack of self-confidence, secondary status due to centuries of male dominated society, customs, tradition, fear from male folk who pass various comments like "Pothe Baseko" (acting over smart), hesitation to speak up with male forestry technician, lack of awareness program, training and study opportunities for women by the government and other development agencies have also been hindrances to women's participation in CF activities (Karki, 2004).

A study conducted in Gosteghat and Tilahar VDC of Kaski District shows that Most of women respondents expressed that lack of adequate time is major factor in inhibiting their participation because much time spend on household work. Other factor is male ego. Women do not possess self confidence for participation in community forestry activities due to lack of education and encouragement by family member. Women are illiterate and there is not enough knowledge in majority of women about the government policy to conserve the forest. There are considerable differences between the theory and practice of participation and it has been emerged in the users which is not becoming able to attract the women towards their active involvement in community forestry activities (Sigdel, 2002).

A study conducted in Kavreplanchok District shows that Women can play a significant role in the protection and development of forest resources in all countries. When all the forests of Nepal were nationalized and were under the protection of Nepal government, illegally extraction of fodder, grass, timber and fuel wood increased. This compelled the government to initiate the community forestry program. Since early 1978, the government initiated this program to include the local people in forest management program. One of the initiatives was the formation of forest committee that included women. Regarding the fact that the women are the 'manager'

of forest resources, in most of the forest committees include the women. But the success of such forest committee would depend on how participated the women members in the committee activities (Thapa, 1999).

A study conducted in Dandagaun CFUF shows that Nepal suffers from desertification, floods, landslide, erosion and other ecological problems every year. Deforestation is the root cause of these problems. Nepal will face many natural calamities in near future if the present rate of deforestation continues. So it is necessary to protect forest and forest resources and its degradation to save the nation from environmental plight. For this, primary environmental protection should be stepped from the grass roots level, and women's role for this is crucial. In this sense, the forest resources will not be protected with the proper participation of women in forest management activities because the real consumer, protector, safe-guard and manager of forest are women (Sapkota, 1994).

The developments of community forestry are strongly linked to different approaches to forest management in the history of Nepal. Before unification in 1769, Nepal has divided into many kingdoms. The rulers of the period have arranged several different systems of forest management. Although most of the forests were state own at that time. People were allowed to collect forest products to fulfill their needs free of cost within certain systems and regulations. Kipat can be taken as an example of an ancient and traditional land holding system of eastern Nepal where forest resources were managed collectively (Joshi, 2005).

A study conducted in Baglung District by Kandel (2005) found lack of internal motivation among users, however, found motivation from family (especially from husband) and forestry technicians.

A study conducted by Shrestha (1987) In Siswa and Lekhanath VDCs of Kaski District, found no women's independent involvement in decision-making in her study, but found some joint role of women during management plan preparation, FUG formation and site selection for tree plantation.

Rokaha (2002) found no active role of women in OP preparation and during General Assembly in case of Khilung Deurali VDC of Syanja District. Access of ordinary

women in sub-dimensions of decision-making found lower. However, access of women EC member in regular meeting found higher in this study.

Thakur (2001) has concluded on his dissertation *The Impact of Commercialization of Community Forestry on the Rural Community in Nepal*. The poor and disadvantaged groups must be encouraged to participate in different community forest management activities. The community based organizations should be involved in community forestry to manage the poor and disadvantaged people at the user group level. The poor and disadvantaged group should be empowered to participate actively in executive committee meeting and users assembly. Their voice should be respected by the decision maker and the forest user group.

Ghimire (2002) has studied on the topic ‘The Contribution of Community Forest Resources on Households Income’; community forest resources are more valuable to the poor as there are resources accessible to them. However, as community forests increase in resources, the poor are likely to be marginalized and their access reduced. It is necessary that adequate institutional mechanisms are ensured that the poor have sufficient access to these resources. If it is possible community forestry resource can be a measure for poverty alleviation the country.

Shrestha (2005) has studied on the topic ‘Impact of Community Forestry on the Socio-economic Condition of the Community Forest Users’; At first by the good activities of CF all CF resources regenerated and then after poor people have benefited by CF. Community forest resources collected vary easily but before CF that was not possible. Then after increased in bio-diversity also and due to this activity, the community, who once had to face water scarcity, has now easy access to the irrigation and drinking water. Regarding the livestock, the number of livestock has not been increased because of grazing problem, cost of hay and lack of caretaker for livestock. Agriculture and government service are major source of income of the community forest users.

A study conducted in Chitwan District by Chhetri (2008) found the participation on forest management by women is limited due to social role. Women are found highly busy involving household chores and household level forestry activities. However, majorities of women are participation in the group interview and discussion. Women

were motivated to participate in CFM due to requirement of forest products, attachment with forest and women involved success stories carried out in different parts of the country. Similarly, women considered the self-inspiration, their villagers, concerned EC, forestry technicians, local political leaders and husband (family member) as potential sources of motivation to involve in CFM.

Women have worked successfully on both annexed and all female forestry committees in Nepal. Rural people and professional foresters generally agree that women are capable for doing committee work of learning how to do it. Gurung mention that people participation is the most essential feature of community forestry. A genus participation approach is important and the association of participation in the programme should grow out of the community organizing process (Gurung, 1999).

Malla has pointed out that a number of problems have been identified by various programs and projects that it is very difficult to involve women in forestry due to the particular nature of Nepalese society where women have a minimum role in decision making, rural women are illiterate and have a localized view of life, the society is male dominated where men are not willing to share their power and authority, without which approaching rural women is impossible (Malla, 1995).

A study conducted in Baruneshwor VDC, Okhaldhunga District shows that community forestry programme is found to be significant for rural development and it is clearly indicate that there is a positive contribution of CF to the livelihood of the people, community forestry has helped the rural poor and their families and children to improve their living standard through the basic infrastructure development, employment creation and income generation. Through the help of community forest, children of the study area have got a change to study in a well facilitated school, road has made people feel comfortable. They have because able in decision-making process at community level and developed the leadership capacity among them (Karki, 2006).

A part from environmental services, improved forest condition increase the availability of forest products to the local people which in turn is expected to improve their livelihoods. Nevertheless, the ability of community forestry to improve the livelihoods of the poor people has remained questionable. All users are supposed to

benefit equally through community forestry. In many cases the poor people in Nepal, however, have been restricted in accessing forest products even for subsistence. Most poor households are not benefiting as much as others and are not very interested in community participation (Malla 2003).

Community forestry in Nepal seeks to promote a decentralized and democratic approach to governing forest resources stressing checks and balances and equal access to participation in processes that govern individuals. Agrawal, Bhattarai and Kanel(1999) describe this type of decentralization as a “highly political process since it seeks to redistribute power and resources within the territorial confines of a given nation-state”. The Forest Act and related forest regulations, administered by DFO, define and operationalize the methods of exercising power and serve to prescribe necessary checks and balances.

A term Paper “Exclusion in Community Forestry of Nepal” shows that poor people are benefiting less and bearing more costs in comparison to the well off households, despite the fact that all users were supposed to share costs and benefits equally. The study indicates that the cost is by and large borne by the poor within communities. Socially un-differentiated rules and socio-economically and politically embedded relationship in CFUGs accounted for restricting access is associated with power. This study shows that well-off, male and upper caste people are dominated in the decision-making process due to existing procedures for electing the committee and making decisions through consensus and voting. In shaping access to resources, interests of powerful elites were reflected in rules, whereas concerns of disadvantaged people were overlooked. Poor people’s dependency on well off households hindered them from speaking out against the well off even if they felt injustice. Despite inclusion of some women and poor in the committee, their influence in decision-making remains weak since they are not adequately recognized due to embedded socio-economic and political relationships (Bhattarai, Gupta and Shah, 2011).

Community forests within the same area have also excluded traditional users, further marginalizing them. In Humla, people walk 1-2 days to a forest to collect Jaributi (high value NTFPs, usually medicinal and aromatic plants). For those with little land sales from jaributi from a significant part of annual income. Many people who had collected medicinal plants and other NTFPs for many years are now prohibited from

going inside the community forest or must pay an extra charge to the local people; as a result, they sometimes risk entering the forest illegally, hoping to avoid the notice of local people (Winrock international, 2002).

Community forests in the Terai, the hills and the high mountains contain large quantities of many NTFPs, including high-value medicinal and aromatic plants. Enterprise and marketing aspects of forest products are a weak component in community forestry. The transformation of forest products into semi or fully processed materials and goods is also very limited, even though such products have huge potential. The community forestry programme should adopt a policy to promote pro-poor enterprises with marketing support.

A study of community forestry in Nepal shows that in contrast to benefits, costs of community forestry are skewed more towards poorer households although all users are supposed to share costs equally. Analysis of time spent in different forests management activities such as forest protection, pruning and thinning reveals that poor people are spending more days annually on average. The reason is that the committee, supposed to implement CFUG rules, is composed of local elites. They hesitate to take action against other elites who shirk for either they have good relationships (family relationship, political and other forms of debased relationship) with each other or the former seek to win the good will of other elites who are powerful and often play a pivotal role to elect and re-elect them to the committee (Poudyal, 2008). In the case of the poor, usually they do not have a close relationship with committee members and they are not well organized or powerful enough to influence an election.

Study reveals the women are still behind men and they have been mostly confined within the boundaries of the household. Participation in implementation of plan without any stake in decision-making women more vulnerable in CF. So the aspiration and the interest of women should be taken into account during the formation of rules and regulations and women's voice should be heard in every decision-making forum. Though it is not possible to change the inherited social norms and structure at once, the issue of women's basic needs and power relation should be addressed simultaneously. Since the support of men is the prime factor in improving the gender relation, ongoing gender sensitization programme targeting to both men

and women is beneficial to change the social norms and perceptions towards women. Benefiting women and improving gender equality in the long run requires a complete gender mainstreaming throughout the policy and implementing structures and mechanism process oriented empowerment approach and capacity building of women is necessary to increase the bargaining power of women.

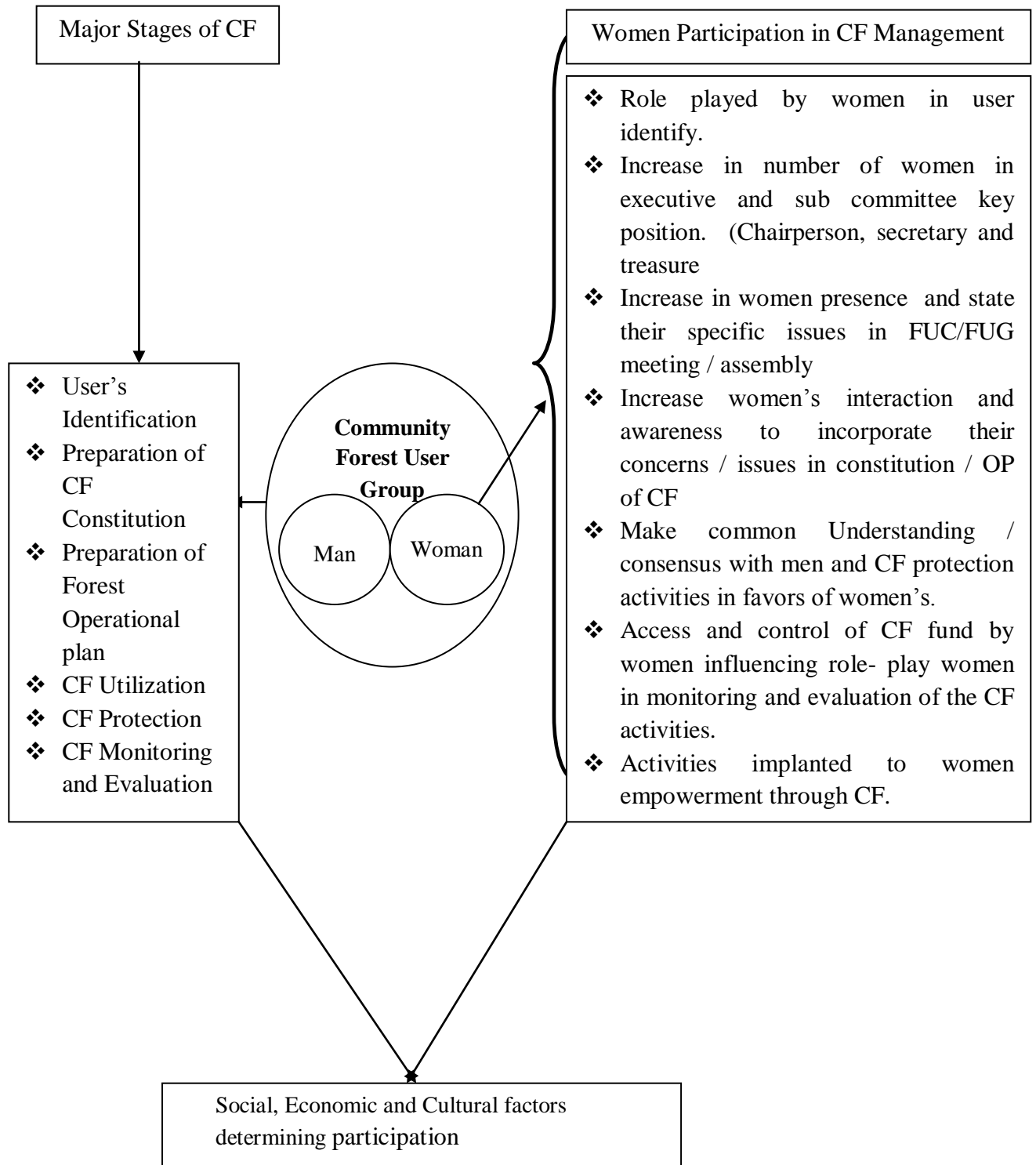
A study Conducted at Dhading District shows that Poor and Women are not present in equal number to the non poor and men in different types of decisions but they are present in making community forestry foundation i.e. operation plan preparation, constitution and committee formation. Women CF increases political inclusion of women in community based natural resources management. There is very little representation of poor respondents in Key positions (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasure and Joint Secretary). Though women and poor are said to be directly related to forest their presence in management body of community forestry whether it is Key position or general position (executive committee member) is lower than men and non poor respectively (Regmi, 2007).

2.8 Conceptual Framework

This study tries to assess the position of women in community forest management especially in decision making process. Until and unless when women are not captured or played active participation in decision or influencing position of any kind of group or committee there will be no any hope for sustainable changes of women's status or their empowerment. In this regards in CF role played by women in users identification, increase in number of women in executive and subcommittee key position i.e. chairperson, secretary and treasurer, increase in women's presence and state their specific issues in FUC/FUG meeting or assembly, increase women's interaction and aware to incorporate their concerns/issues in constitution operational plan of community forest, make common understanding or consensus with men and CF protection activities in favor of women's access control of CF fund by women, influencing role-play by women in monitoring and evaluation of the CF activities and activities implemented to women empowerment through CF in different time phases were indicators for assessing the position of women in decision making level in CFUGs.

The users identification, preparation of CF rules and regulations, preparation of operational plan, CF utilization and protection, monitoring and evaluation are the major steps taken for community forest management. Both males and females are involved in CF management in a user group and there exists the vital role of socio-economic and cultural factors. In our context with respect to the cultural and social practices male are dominating females and grasped all the opportunities by male. Presently the government policies are in favors of social and gender inclusion in CF. But whereas equity aspect is in shadow. Thus women and deprived people are not able to grasp these opportunities in systematic and sustainable way.

Figure: 1 Conceptual framework adopted in the Study



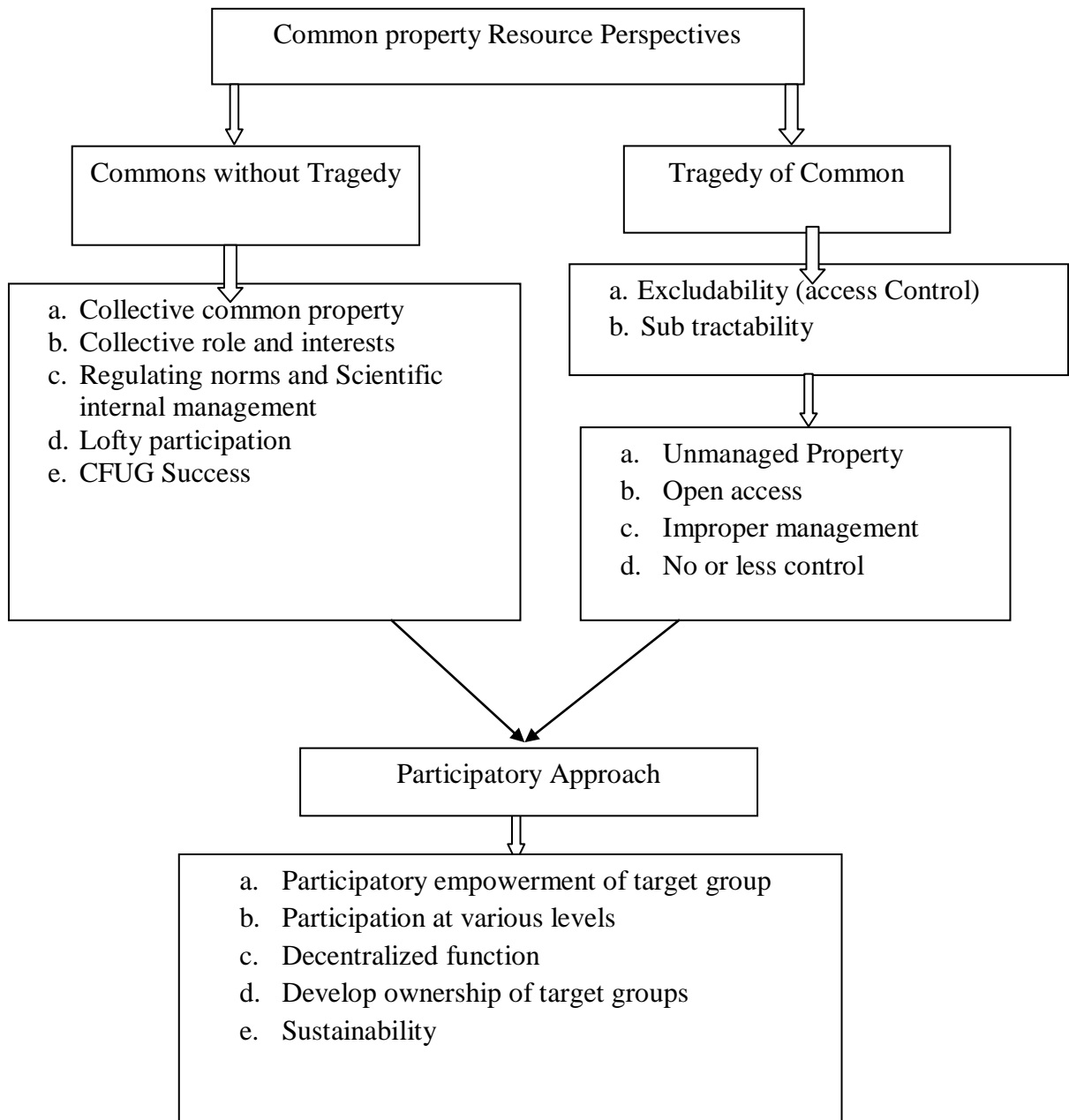
2.9 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts theories like (a) common property resource management (b) a common-pool resource (c) participatory theory to stream line the findings toward the purpose objectives. The major perspectives "Commons without Tragedy " and "Tragedy of commons". In commons without Tragedy" perspective, there is hope for overall management of common property by all concern people's common efforts. To make systematic management there is defined collective role and responsibilities with their interest and clear cut regulated norms. As a result, common consensus helps to develop understanding resulting in the lofty participation for management of common property.

"Tragedy of commons" argued that most of the people's are not interested to manage the common property. Some key or elite persons control all the access and use in their favor. Therefore, in this perspective not collective efforts and common property is in unmanaged condition, open access, out is control and improper management are the resultant consequences. As a result the property is going to deteriorate.

There is a high change of Participatory management. Approach in CF. for proper management of common property the long shift of the development paradigms also prefer the participatory approaches, because this approach is essential for the empowerment of target group and marginal groups to increase their participation level, decentralized function and to make resources useful to the concerned community. It will help to sustain the programme. The theoretical framework used in the study is given below:

Figure 2 Theoretical framework



CHAPTER - THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the technical aspect of research. Only one method is not sufficient to gather all kinds of information's related to the study. To make the scientific and reliable, different useful methods should adopt during study. Further, it includes location of study area, process of data collection, and statistical tools and computer software used during data analysis.

3.1 Population

It is practically impossible to study the whole population for an individual researcher, as it is time consuming and more costlier. So it becomes necessary to make a decision with the sample size from the population that is likely to be representative in as many factors as possible such as age, sex, cast, educational background, family structure etc. The total population of Pakhapani VDC is 3749 ward number 7,8 and 9 are considered as the universe of this study as the households belonging to these wards are the only member of CFUG.

The total population of the member in the community is 1142 out of which 571 are female and 571 are male. There are 177 households as the member of community forestry.

3.2 Sample Size and Technique

Households from each selected ward are included in the sample. The researcher had made a preliminary visit to the study site in order to identify the representative settlement for study.

The Ekkane chaur Community Forest User Groups consists 177 user's households of ward number 7,8 and 9 of Pakhapani VDC, Parbat. Which is considered as the universe of the study. 50 percent (89 households) were selected for detail study. There are 6 caste/ethnic groups as member of CFUG. From each caste/ethnic group, only 35 sample households are selected for gurung ,.12 sample households are selected for B.K., 2 sample households are selected for Darji , 14 sample households are selected

for Sarki, 11 sample households are selected for Brahaman and 15 sample households are selected for Chhetri , are include in the sample.

3.3 Research Design

Descriptive research designs are used in the study as it helps in fact finding inquiries on selected topic. Therefore, this method has been used to describe the present condition of women participation in community forest management in the study area. The current study is mainly based on primary data obtained from the survey. A questionnaire has been designed to collect information related to women participation in community forest management. Designing the research questions needs specification of the variables. First of all, a planning has been made as to which variable ought to be included in and , which should be excluded from the research study. Hence, the researcher has included necessary variables for obtaining information easily related to women's participation in community forest management. Two types of variables have been considered in these research-quantitative and qualitative variables.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

On the basis of nature, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The quantitative variables such as age, population, land holdings etc than can be quantified are used in the study. The qualitative variables such as occupation, cast, educational status, nature of women participation in CFUG etc that cannot be quantified are also used as the basis of analysis in this study.

The primary data were collected from the questionnaire interview, observation, schedule group discussion etc. Similarly, the secondary data were also collected from VDC, published and unpublished documents like, books, journals, articles, research reports and thesis etc.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

To collect the required information the researcher has visited the selected HHs for households survey and fill up the questionnaire, for the further and supplementary information, interview with women of related area, focus group discussion at

settlement, case study, key informant interview and observation method have been carried.

3.5.1 Data Collection Techniques

(a) Household Survey

The researcher went to the study site and filled up the questionnaire from respondents to get such primary data the researcher conducted door to door visit with the member of this community forestry.

(b) Interview

Researcher visited the study area and filled up the questionnaire from the respondent. Women member of each sample households were the respondent of this survey from interview a number of data acquired from respondents.

(c) Focus Group Discussion

A FGD in women group (30 women) was conducted at community level. During FGD, some qualitative data on attitude and perception of women towards their role in CF, role of EC and forestry technicians in CF management, motivating and hindering factors of women's to involve in CF management were collected.

(d) Key Informant Interview

This technique was conducted to collect primary data. The respondents were asked based on checklist developed. Altogether 7 respondents were interviewed. Interview was held with the ward member, teacher, leader and other social workers. Principle issues such as history of CF, status of caste/ethnic group and women's participation, benefit sharing system of EC, institutional culture of FUG regarding CF management etc were there. Answers received from interviews were used for background information and for triangulation of data collected from other sources.

3.5.2 Data Collection Tools

Within above mentioned techniques, following tools have been implemented for the collection of data:

(a) Questionnaire schedule

Structured questionnaire schedule was prepared to generate the realistic accurate data from household survey of the respondents. To make favorable situation, the researcher had tried to encourage the people to share information without any hesitation and heartily requested to fill the questionnaire by them.

(b) Checklist

Checklist is also important tool of data collection. This tool was focused on the various aspect of women participation, level of awareness, participation condition, sustainability condition, skill development training and problem facing and more issues.

(c) Observation

Observation was used to collect qualitative information like women's participation in community forest management activities including decision making, monitoring, evaluation activities, program implementation and benefit sharing. Observation also helped the researcher to re-check the information which is collected through the other tools. Observations regarding the participation of women on different activities such as general assembly, executive committee and operational plan were made.

3.5.3 Data Processing and Analysis Technique

The qualitative and quantitative data were gathered from the field. Qualitative data like knowledge, perception, attitude beliefs, myths and ideas of the community people interpret descriptively to justify queries of women's participation in community forest management practices. Collected information from interview and observation were descriptively analyzed that includes their attitude, and behavior of users and FUG

members. Beside these, quantitative information was received from the household questionnaire relationship of sex, age, caste, ethnicity and economic status of users.

Qualitative and quantitative data collected from the field survey were coded and tabulated manually. The percentages and averages were calculated by using calculator. Qualitative data has been analyzed descriptively with the use of table and frequency distribution.

CHAPTER - FOUR

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE USERS GROUP

This chapter covers the general information about social and economic profile of the user's group of study area.

4.1 Physical Setting

Parbat District, a part of Dhawalagiri zone, is one of the seventy-five districts of Nepal, a landlocked country of South Asia. The district, with Kushma as its district headquarters, covers an area of 53682.21 hectares and has a population (Nepal Census, 2001) of 158992. Pokhara - Baglung highway lies in this district.

Pakhapani is a Village Development Committee in Parbat District in Dhawalagiri Zone of Southern Nepal. Pakhapani VDC is bordered by Rapakot VDC Shyanga District in the East, Lunkhu VDC in the West, Phalamkhani VDC in the North and Balakot & Bhorle VDC in the South. At the time of 2001 Nepal census, it has a population of 3749 people living in 573 individual households,(District Profile, 2058).

Ekkane chaur CFUG is located at Lamtun village of Pakhapani VDC- 7 and 8, in the Parbat District of the Dhawalagiri Zone.

The Ekkane chaur CF was formally handed over to the community in 2050 B.S. It encompasses an area of 17.61 ha. The forest area contains both natural forest as well as plantation forest. Ekkane chaur CF is bordered by Shyanja in the East, ward number 7 Pakhapani VDC (settlement) in the West, Phalamkhani VDC (settlement) in the North and, ward number 8 and Pakhapani VDC (settlement) in the South.

There are total 14 executive members including 7 female members in Ekkane chaur CFUG. Ethnically, the study area is dominated by Gurung caste following by Brahmin and chhetri, Dalit.

The climate is mainly Sub tropical that the majority of hard wood Sallo , Paiu, Uttis , Chilauni etc in the forests. Six CF was handovered in this Pakhapani VDC and one CF processing of handover.

Basically, fertile agriculture land, pastureland, forest etc. are the major natural resources of the VDC. Fertile agriculture land and pastureland has strongly supported to agriculture and animal husbandry as the main and secondary occupation of the people of this VDC.

Facility of electricity is not available in the VDC. The VDC includes six primary and Two secondary (government) schools and One higher secondary (Government) school. Similarly, a primary health care center (health facility) available in the VDC.

Table-1: Pakhapani VDC

Ward Number	Total Population	Total Households	Sampled Households	Member Households	Percentage
7	353	57	29	57	100
8	407	61	31	61	100
9	382	59	28	59	100
Total	1142	177	89	177	100

Sources: CF Profile and NGO Profile, 2011

Table-1 shows that total population of ward number 7,8 and 9 are 1142, total numbers of households are 177, sampled households are 89 and member households are 177 in the study area. Pakhapani VDC ward number 7, 100 percent of households is involved in CFUG, in ward number 8, 100 percent of households are involved in CFUG, and in ward number 9, 100 percent households are involved in CFUG respectively.

4.2 Caste/Ethnic Composition

The most striking thing of Nepal is its multi-ethnic feature. There are many groups that live together in the same area but it is not without hierarchy. In ward number 7, the maximum numbers of people are Brahmin and Chhetri and in ward number 8 and 9, there are Gurung in maximum number. The Brahmins and Chhetris are considered twice born caste as they wear a sacred thread called 'Janai'. The Hindu ritual also considers them as the purest groups. Placed last in the social ladder are the untouchables. The Dalits are under this category. Ekkane chaur CFUG is comprised of a mix of the following castes and ethnicities; Brahmin, Chhetri, Gurung and Dalit,

Table-2 Caste/ Ethnic Composition

S.N.	Caste/Ethnic	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Brahmin	11	13
2	Chhetri	15	17
3	Gurung	35	39
5	Dalit	28	31
	Total	89	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table-2 shows 13 percent Respondents are Brahman, 17 percent Respondents are Chhetri, 39 percent Respondents are Gurung and 31 percent Respondents are dalit .

4.3 Age Distribution

Age distribution of population has an important role in planning, economic and social development. Age characteristics of population describe the social aspects of community like aging of population; dependency and social responding that are often different with respect to their age.

This Study has categorized age structure of respondents into main five parts. In first part of respondents belonging to age 20-30 years old, second part of respondents belonging to age 31-40 years old, third part of respondents belonging to age 41-50 years old, fourth part of respondents belonging to age 51-60 years old and fifth part of respondents belong to age above 60 years old.

Table-3: Age Distribution of Sampled Respondents

S.N.	Age Groups	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	20-30 years old	9	10
2.	31-40 years old	20	22
3.	41-50 years old	35	40
4.	51-60 years old	15	17
5.	Above 60 years old	10	11
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-3 shows that 9 respondents female are in 20-30 years age groups and only 10 female are above 60 years old. In CFUG respondents, age group 31-40 and 41-50 years old are very interested to talk about forestry progress and they play a main role to protect, and manage other activities, and in age group above 60, they are sincere about forest activities.

4.4 Land Holding Size

To study the wild economic condition of the respondents, the researcher has developed an indicator for assessing landholding size. Which includes Khet and Bari?

Table-4: Land Holding Size of the Sampled Respondents

S.N.	Land size	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	1-5 Ropani	39	44
2.	6-10 Ropani	12	13
3.	11-15 Ropani	25	28
4.	16-20 Ropani	10	11
5.	Above 20 Ropani	3	4
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Ropani is a unit of land area of hill Nepal. 1 Ropani is equivalent to 508.5 sq. miters.

Table-4 shows that majority of people of study area are holding less than Six ropani of land. Land has a kind of symbolic of well being.

4.5 Food Sufficiency

User households were classified in to five groups i.e. <3 months, 3-6 months, 6-9 months, 9-12 months and cereal selling, according to the situation of their cereal production from their own land and status of food sufficiency. Families having similar quantity of cereal production are placed in particular class and analyzed accordingly. There was no any landless person in the study area.

Table- 5: Distribution of Sample Households by Food Sufficiency

S.N.	Food Sufficiency	No. of Households	Percentage
1.	<3 months	39	44
2.	4-6 months	12	13
3.	7-9 months	25	28
4.	10-12 months	10	11
5.	More than 1 year	3	4
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-5 shows that 85 percent users have foods sufficient for less than 10 months consumption. Level of food sufficiency was discovered directly related with bigger land holding size and higher quality (cropping intensity) of land occupied by the particular family. It is also related with family size. It was observed that food sufficiency from own land is considered as a symbolic meaning of well being in the society.

4.6 Occupational Structure

The word occupation literacy denotes the primary work of an individual. This part has categorized the occupation of respondents into six parts. Like agriculture (family), service, remittance, business and teaching is main occupation of the respondents.

Table-6: Occupation Structure of Sampled Women Respondents

S.N.	Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Agriculture	45	51
2.	Service/wages	28	31
3.	Remittance	4	4
4.	Business	4	4
5.	Animal husbandry	7	8
6.	Teaching	2	2
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Rural economics is based on agriculture. Field survey shows the majority of women respondents' members (51 percent) are engaged in agriculture. Similarly service/wages holders are 31 percent, only 4 percent are engaged in business, 8 percent are engaged in animal husbandry and out of 89 women respondents only 2 percent are engaged in teaching.

4.7 House Types

House types were also considered in the study. Mainly Pakki and Kacchi houses were found in the study area. Only 20% of the people are having Semi-pakki house in the study area. The situation of housing types is shown in the Table-7.

Table-7: House Types of Sampled women Respondents

S.N.	House Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Pakki	45	51
2.	Semi-Pakki	18	20
3.	Kacchi	26	29
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-7 shows that majority of the houses (51 percent) were consists of Pakki in the study area followed by Kacchi houses (29 percent). 20 percent houses were found Semi-Pakki in study area. Thus, the housing pattern of the study area is mostly depended on forest resources.

4.8 Facility in the Households

The researcher observed drinking water, toilet/latrine as a physical facility in the sample households. Almost all households are not using electricity facility. Pour flush latrine facilities is satisfactory in study area, drinking water facilities are also satisfactory.

Although the study area is most needy and feasible for bio-gas plant. The main cause of this situation was the lack of awareness and complex government policy for the subsidy. Due to lack of bio-gas plant, the exploitation of fuel wood is higher and health condition of female found poor.

4.9 Religion

People of the study area were found to be the follower of Hindu and Buddha religion, which is given in table-20.

Table- 8: Distribution of Sampled Households by Religions

S.N.	Religions	Households	Percentage
1.	Hindu	54	61
2.	Buddha	35	39
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Majority of sampled respondents (61 percent) of the study area were found to be the follower of Hindu religion. Only 39 percent households found Buddhist, who were from Gurung caste. However, followers of both religions were living in harmony.

CHAPTER-FIVE

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CF MANAGEMENT

This chapter covers the general information about Woman's participation in CF management of the study area.

5.1 Women's Access to Forest Resource Products

The villagers use the forest products to fulfill their agricultural needs and they consider the most important forest products to be fuel wood for daily energy needs, wood for agricultural implements and timber for house construction. They collect bedding materials and fodder for their cattle. The provision of forest areas open to general users is only once in a week, and for timber as described in CFUG's operational plan, is once a year. In practice, however, all users have access to collect needed forest products, except timber through the year (open time).

Table-9: Reason for Being a Member of CFUG

S.N.	Reasons	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Poor economic condition	18	21
2.	To support the family	25	28
3.	To be self reliant	26	29
4.	All the above	20	22
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-9 shows that 21 percent respondents have become the member of CFUG for being poor economic condition, 28 percent respondents have become the member of CFUG to support the family, 29 percent being self reliant and 22 percent said that they are involved in the CFUG for all the reasons mentioned.

5.2 Women's Involvement in Decision Making Process

Women's involvement in decision making process in CF development and management is considered in terms of their involvement in constitution preparation meeting, name registration in CFUG, involvement in operational plan preparation and

using voting right for executive committee member selection. Detail of women's involvement in decision making process is given in Table-10:

Table-10: Women's participation in Decision-making Process

S.N.	Description	Participation	Percentage
1.	Involvement in constitution preparation meeting	5	6
2.	Name registration from own family as CF user	15	17
3.	Involvement in OP preparation	7	8
4.	Practicing the voting right	10	11
5.	No participation any programmes	52	58
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-10 shows that only 6 percent women were involved in constitution preparation meeting, which is low as compared with women's involvement in operational plan preparation. According to respondents, this was due to mainly the ignorance of user in CF registration and patriarchy influence of men and inadequate information regarding CF's constitution. Even in the absence of male, the village leader registered his name as the group member. On the other hand, some other respondents had an experience that they were ignored to the extent that their attendance was not registered.

Like registration from own family as CF user, the researcher found 25 percent involvement of women as household head. According to the respondents, leaders and executive committee members it was neither the keen interest of women to involve in CF management nor the liberal nature of men but was due to absence of males by any reasons or no presence of mature male in the family. Lack of awareness and exposure like training, visit etc. was found one of the causes of this situation.

The researcher found again low involvement of women in operational plan preparation. 8 percent women from the community found involved in operational plan preparation. The involvement of women in plan preparation was not active and decisive. According to respondents the EC do not mobilize the users effectively in operational plan preparation as well as other such gatherings. Due to lack of adequate

knowledge and skill on concern matter it had found more dependency of executive committee on forestry technicians regarding operational plan preparation.

During the study it is found that the EC members were selected through the unanimous decisions. Total 7 members were represented in executive committee of the CFUG. Reliable and capable candidates found forced to become women EC member. The CFUG consists of 50 percent women members in EC, which is positive point from the gender balance perspective. Unfortunately, most of men in CFUG have occupied the vital portfolios such as Chairperson, Secretary and Treasure etc.

The socio- economic status of women EC members was assessed based on their age, education, and economic/social status through conducting FGD and minute books of the CFUG. Majority of the women EC members were between the ages of 30-45 years. Women below 30 years were not found in EC. According to women respondents below 30 years were not easily acceptable as EC member due to their instability and immaturity. Hence, middle-aged women are forced to act as EC member. Regarding educational status of women EC member were found just literate and illiterate. Hence, women EC members were found in the same position as compared with male member. Lack of education was the reflection of overall education of respective FUG, However, found equal committed as the EC member.

In the context of economic status (well being), Women are/were from medium-class and high class families. Unfortunately, researcher found low representation of those women who have poor socio-economic condition. Reason behind it was either such women hesitated to hold such an important post or they rejected from those who are richer and so-called highly recognized people. Attendance of EC member in monthly meeting was assessed based on the minute books of (last five years) the concerned FUG. Attendance was assessed on the basis of sex and year. Moreover, attendance was categorized as expected and actual. Expected ratio of attendance varies year to year due to turnover of the EC member.

The researcher found low attendance of women EC member as compared to men in monthly meeting of CFUG. According to them this was mainly due to inappropriate time of meeting. In their opinion, the monthly meeting used to conduct during morning, which is the peak hour of women. They reported that holiday, when women

possess relatively less pressure of word due to the cooperation from males, which make easy to attend the meeting to women EC members.

During attending the monthly meeting of CFUG the researcher found full participation of women. Regarding the qualitative aspect of meeting attendance, women EC member's participation was passive in the vital discussions and in taking decisions. The researcher observed more patriarchic influence in Brahmin caste. Likewise, the researcher observed more dependency of women EC members on male members due to lower confidence on subject matter and dominating role of male members. Hence, decision-making process in CF management is highly influenced by women's age than the educational status.

A similar study conducted by Shrestha (1987) in Siswa and Lekhnath VDCs of Kaski district, found no women's independent involvement in decision making in her study, but found some joint role of women during management plan preparation, FUG formation and site selection for tree plantation. Similarly, Adhikari (2001) found very low participation of women in overall planning and decision making process of CF. Recently, Rokaha (2002) found no active role of women in OP preparation and during GA in case of Khilung Deurali VDC of Syanja district. Access of ordinary women in sub-dimensions of decision making found lower. However, access of women EC member in regular meeting found higher in this study. Since, result of this study partially agrees with the results of Adhikari and Rokaha but differ significantly with the result of Shrestha.

Table-11: Putting Agenda in the Meeting

S.N.	Agenda	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Occasionally	9	10
2.	Frequently	7	8
3.	No Ideas	73	82
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-11 shows that 10 percent respondents put their agenda occasionally, 8 percent respondents put their agenda frequently and 82 percent sampled respondents have not got any idea.

Table-12: Level of Woman’s Participation in Decision making Process

S.N.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	High degree of participation	10	11
2.	Poor Participation	29	33
3.	Not participatory	50	56
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-12 shows that among of sampled user 11 percent respondents show the decision making process is quiet participatory while remaining 33 percent respondents decision making process was poor participation and remaining 56 percent respondents did not get any opportunity of participation in decision making process.

Table-13: Participation Status in the General Assembly

S.N.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Brahmin	28	31
2.	Chhetri	15	17
3.	Gurung	35	40
4	Dalit	11	12
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-13 shows that the active participation of Dalit in general assembly seemed low. Among the Brahman, Chhetri & Gurung seemed high percentage comparison to Dalit.

5.3 Types of Training

Sampled women respondents have received different training from different institutions like, VDC, CF, and NGOs etc. which is shown in the Table-14:

Table-14: Types of Training Received by Sampled Respondents

S.N.	Types of Training	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Literacy	20	22
2.	Health	19	21
3.	Leadership	35	40
4.	Saving and Credit	15	17
5.	Sewing and Cutting	0	0
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-14 shows that 40 percent respondents received leadership training, 22 percent received literacy training, 21 percent respondents received health training and so on. Leadership training receiving female are maximum in number.

5.4 Family Structure

Family structure plays an effective role in shaping the role and responsibilities of the women members. The following has been status of respondents in terms of their family structure:

Table -15: Family Structure of the Respondents

S.N.	Family Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Nuclear Family	61	69
2.	Joint Family	28	31
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-15 shows that 69 percent family has living in a nuclear small family. Out of 89 sampled respondents, 31 percent are found belonged to joint family.

5.5 Livestock Holding Pattern

Information regarding domestic animal was collected during the study. The Cow, buffalo and goat were major domestic animals in the study area. Trend of livestock raising practice is given in Table-16.

Table-16: Livestock Keeping Trend in Sampled Respondents

Types of Livestock	No. of Livestock	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Buffaloes	55	35	39
Cows	32	25	28
Goats	60	29	33
Pigs	0	0	0
Total	147	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-16 reveals that goat is the most common animal of FUG. 60 goats are owned by 33 percent respondents. Similarly the survey respondent's possess 55 buffaloes and 32 cows which are owned by 39 percent and 28 percent respectively and pigs are not owned by any respondents.

According to the people this trend was due to easy access of more forest area, and free grazing system in the study area. Animal husbandry found as an integral part of farming. Users are keeping livestock as a source of organic manure, milk and meat.

5.6 Advice for Joining CFUG as a Member

The following information is obtained why they are about who gave them encouragement and advice for being a member of CFUG.

Table-17: Advise for Joining CFUG as a Member

S.N.	Source of Advice	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Self	37	42
2.	Neighbor	20	22
3.	Parents	15	17
4.	Husband	10	11
5.	Friend	7	8
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

42 percent of respondents said that they have themselves become the member of the CFUG. Only 8 percent of respondents said that they are involved in the community forestry because the friend encouraged them to become the member of the CFUG.

5.7 Marital Status of the Respondents

Marriage is one of the most effective social institutions that determine the role and responsibilities of every member of the family unit. Women get more responsibilities when they are married. Table-18 shows the marital status of the sampled respondents of the research.

Table-18: Marital Status of the Respondents

S.N.	Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Married	88	99
2.	Unmarried	1	1
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Only 1 percent respondents are found to have been unmarried and the rest all are married in the sampled respondents.

5.8 Educational Status

For the study purpose, users were broadly classified in two categories such as literate and illiterate. During the study the educational status of respondents was also studied separately. Literate respondents of the study area were further classified according to their level of education, which is given in Table-19.

Table-19: Educational Status of Sampled Respondents

S.N.	Level of Education	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	41	46
2.	Primary	25	28
3.	Secondary	20	22
4.	Intermediate	3	4
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-19 shows that 46 percent of respondents were illiterate in the study area. Due to cause of lower literacy rate of female, male are not encouraging female to play the effective role in decision making process. Although there are so many other factors like social norms and values affecting the involvement of women in CF management.

5.9 Distances between CF and Residence of CFUGs

The large numbers of CFUGs have found in the range of Below 500 meters. After that, the lower number of CFUGs is in the range of above 1500 meters distance.

Table -20: Distance between CF and Residence of CFUGs

Distance in (meters)	Households	Percentage
Below - 500	86	49
500-1000	53	30
1000-1500	30	16
Above 1500	8	5
Total	177	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-20 shows the distance between CF and the residence of all CFUG members. 49 percent CFUG members have settled within below 500 meter distance. 30 percent and 16 percent of them are found within 500-1000 meters and 1000-1500 meters respectively. Only 5 percent are settled at distance above 1500 meters.

5.10 Hindering Factors

Various factors, which negatively influence to women's participation in CF management, were assessed in the study. Information was collected from the respondents by using a set of questionnaire developed. Various responses collected from Users are organized and analyzed accordingly. Respondents of the study are considered that regular household chore as a main problem of women. They had to undertake all field works and household chores except culturally restricted (eg. Ploughing). Thus, women were loaded with more works. Similarly, lack of encouragement and underestimation of women participation are considered as second

problem. Such type of social and moral problems is found severe considering the lesser encouragement and backbiting.

According to the respondents, women were considered with inadequate knowledge and skills as next problem of women that they received not much training and never been participated study tours. According to them, women of the community lacked the formal education. Thus they found lack of knowledge and skill on CF management.

Similar studies conducted have raised various hindering issues regarding women's participation. A study conducted in Bhojpur District by Rai (2008) found lack of technical knowledge/skills, maximum time for household chores and low level of economic condition, socio-cultural restriction and maximum workload as a problem of women to involve in CF management. Likewise, a study conducted in Taplejung District by Gurung (2009) found male domination, lack of time, lack of knowledge about rules of CF, poor economic condition, lack of permission to attend meeting, feeling of unable than men, feeling of needless to participate and illiteracy among women as a problem.

This study agrees with the result of previous studies regarding women's hindering factors partially. However, it does not agree with the issues such as low level economic condition of women, lack of permission of male to attend meeting, feeling of unable than men, feeling of needless to participate, and illiteracy among women.

5.11 Motivating Factors

Motivating factors of women for involvement in CF was assessed in the study. According to users there are various factors, which determines to frequency and effectiveness of women's participation in CF management. From the study it is found that majority of the respondents of the study area are involved for the fulfillment of day-to-day requirement of forest productions like timber, fuel wood, fodder and non-timber productions. It is not a new phenomenon but is a characteristic of subsistence economy that depends up on forest resources. Similarly, affection and attachment with their adjacent forest found as second factor of motivation of women. The affection with community forest was deep-seated due to continuous attachment with forest from the childhood of women, which influenced women to involve in

community forest management. Minorities of the respondents were inspired with some success stories/events carried out in neighboring villages and other parts of the country, in which women's role was substantial. This factor found as supportive and encouraging one.

From the interaction with forestry technicians, EC members, respondents and field observation the researcher found that motivating is a psychological and sentimental situation of user, which lead them to involve in community forest management.

Similarly, the researcher observed that motivated women involved more effectively in CF management.

Sources of motivation: After the factors of motivation, the researcher assessed the sources of motivation, which inspires women to involve in community forest management. From the study, it is found that majority of the respondents guided to involve in community forest management with their villagers/society. The researcher found influence of demonstrative (fashion) effects created by the villagers. On the other hand, peer groups found as effective tool of motivation, which positively influenced women in CF management. The secondary sources are self-inspiration, which was created due to long and continuous practice of the seniors as well as the users.

Similarly, respondents of the study area considered the executive committee as third sources of motivation. The EC found conducted meetings in certain interval of time, which converted as sources of motivation. Lastly, respondents considered the forestry technicians found interacted with women during monthly meeting, training and other activities, which inspired women to involve as executive committee member, participant of training etc.

A study conducted in Baglung District by Kandel (2005) found lack of internal motivation among users, however, found motivation from family (especially from husband) and forestry technicians. In the next study conducted in Taplejung District by Gurung (2009) reported that more women were motivated from local political leaders followed by self-inspiration and from their husband. Result of this study agrees partially with the results of previous studies. The researcher fully agrees particularly on self-motivation of women and motivation by forestry technicians.

However, other sources of motivation do not agree with the results of previous studies.

Table-21: Suggestion to Accelerate the Participation of Women in CF Management

S.N.	Suggestions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Training	30	34
2.	Empowerment	44	49
3.	Skill Enhancement	15	17
	Total	89	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2011

Table-21 shows that 34 percent of respondents were suggested that if accelerate the participation of women in CF management, they were trained, 49 percent said that they are involved in empowerment training and only 17 percent were suggested that skill enhancement.

5.12 Cultural Norms – Caste/Ethnic Norms

Because of social-cultural beliefs and attitudes, women have more limited access to opportunities lying out side of the home then men. Cultural situation and beliefs influence the differential participation of the men and women in forest management; women are hindered more then men because of structural domination. There are certain tasks that are traditionally viewed as men’s work in particular community works. Because community Forestry is seen as a community work, it is through to be one of the tasks which should do by the men. In contrast, it is believed that household tasks should be done by women. Through women are involved in the Community Forest they are generally restricted to forest activities such as planting, pruning and collecting forest products. On the other hand, men are through to have greater talents in management aspects including meeting and making decisions concerning fund distribution and programme planning. The prevailing socio-cultural values affect women’s involvement in public works.

5.13 Women's Access to forest Resource Products

The villagers use the forest products to fulfill their agricultural needs and they consider the most important forest products to be fuel wood for daily energy needs, wood for agricultural implements and timber and poles for house construction. They collect bedding materials and fodder for their cattle . The provision of forest areas opened to general users, as described in the CFUG's Operational Plan, is once a year. In practice, however, all users have access to collect needed forest products , except timber throughout the year.

5.14 Women's Access in Fund Mobilization

Community Forests have income sources such as yearly fees, firewood fees, revolving fund support and interest on bank deposit, but has only a small amount of saving in the bank through they invest some money for social work, including prizes for the best students of the community school and support for the construction of a bridge. Due to the lack of funds, Akkanechaur CFUG has not invested funds in many infrastructure activities , but it has support them income generating activities(ie, goat , pig farming) the community as a whole and women in particular , there is no fund mobilized due to the lack of adequate funds.

5.15 Distribution of Member of CFUG

July 1995, FECOFUN has grown into a social movement organization with about 8.5 million people represented all of women are forest users. It is a national federation of forest users across Nepal dedicated to promoting and protecting user's rights.

Table-22: Distribution of Members

S.N.	Regions	Number of CFUGs
1.	Eastern	2,497
2.	Central	3,338
3.	Western	3,573
4.	Mid-Western	2,327
5.	Far-Western	1,793
	Total	13,528

Sources: www.fucofun.org 01 September, 2011.

Table-22 shows that, in the Eastern Development Region, 2497 community forest user groups are involved in FUCOFUN. Similarly, in Central Development Region, Western Development Region, Mid-Western Development Region and Far-Western Development Region 3338, 3573, 2327 and 1793 community forest user groups are involved in FUCOFUN respectively.

Table-23: Community Forest Achievements

S.N.	Description	Unit	Achievements	Remarks
1.	User Group Formed	Number	17,685	
2.	Area Handover	Hectare	1,652,654	
3.	Households Benefited	Houses	2177858	
4.	Women User Groups	Number	784	
5.	Ratio of Male in CF user	Percent	25.51	
6.	Ratio of group committee female	Percent	74.49	

Sources: www.dof.gov.np, 01 September, 2011.

Table-23 shows that 17685 User Group Formed, 1652654 hectare area were handover, 2177858 households were benefited, number of women user groups are 784, Ratio of male in community forest user in 25.51 percent and Ratio of group committee female are 74.49 percent till 01 September 2011: www.dof.gov.np.

Figure :3 Location Map of Parbat District in Nepal

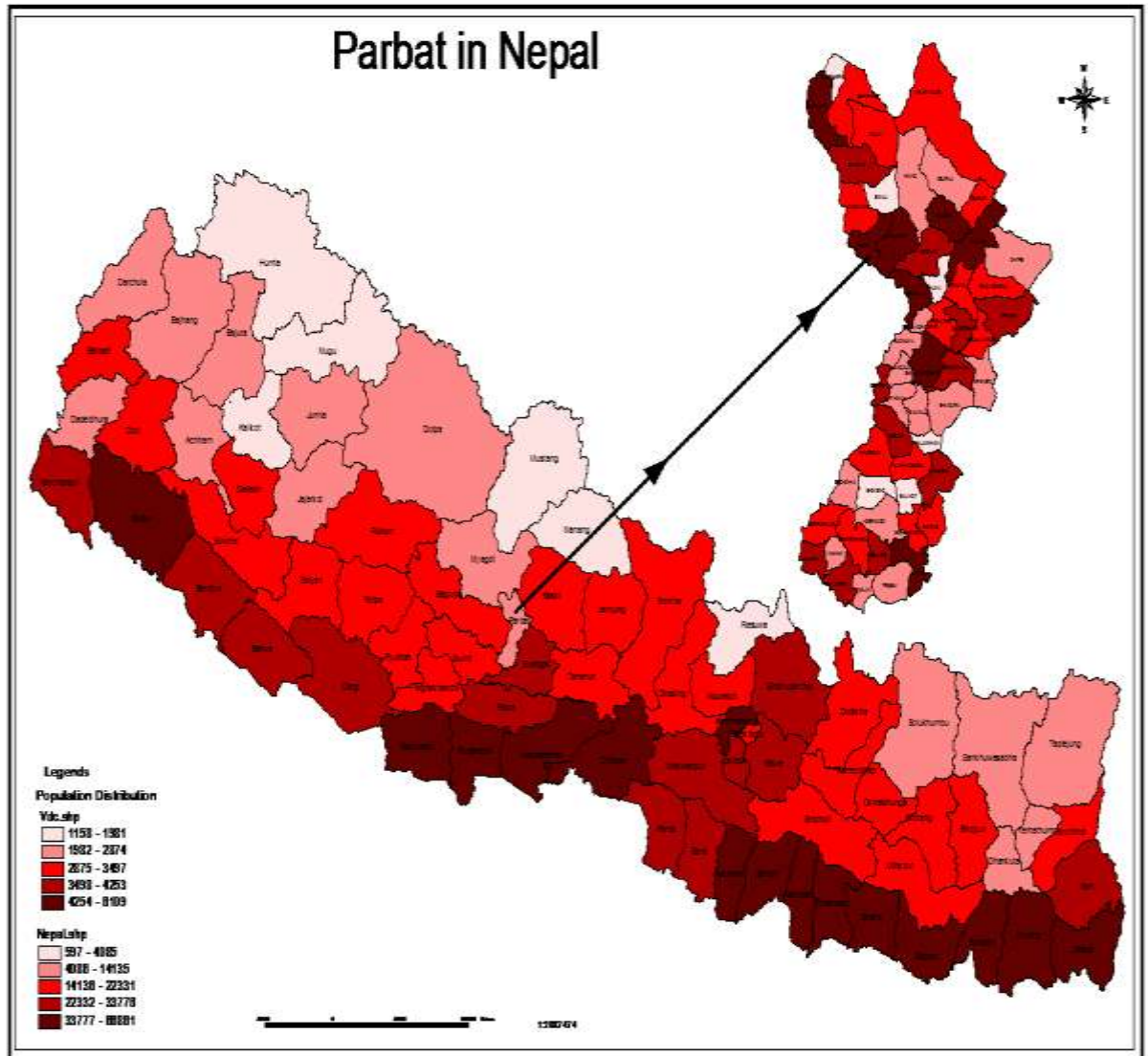
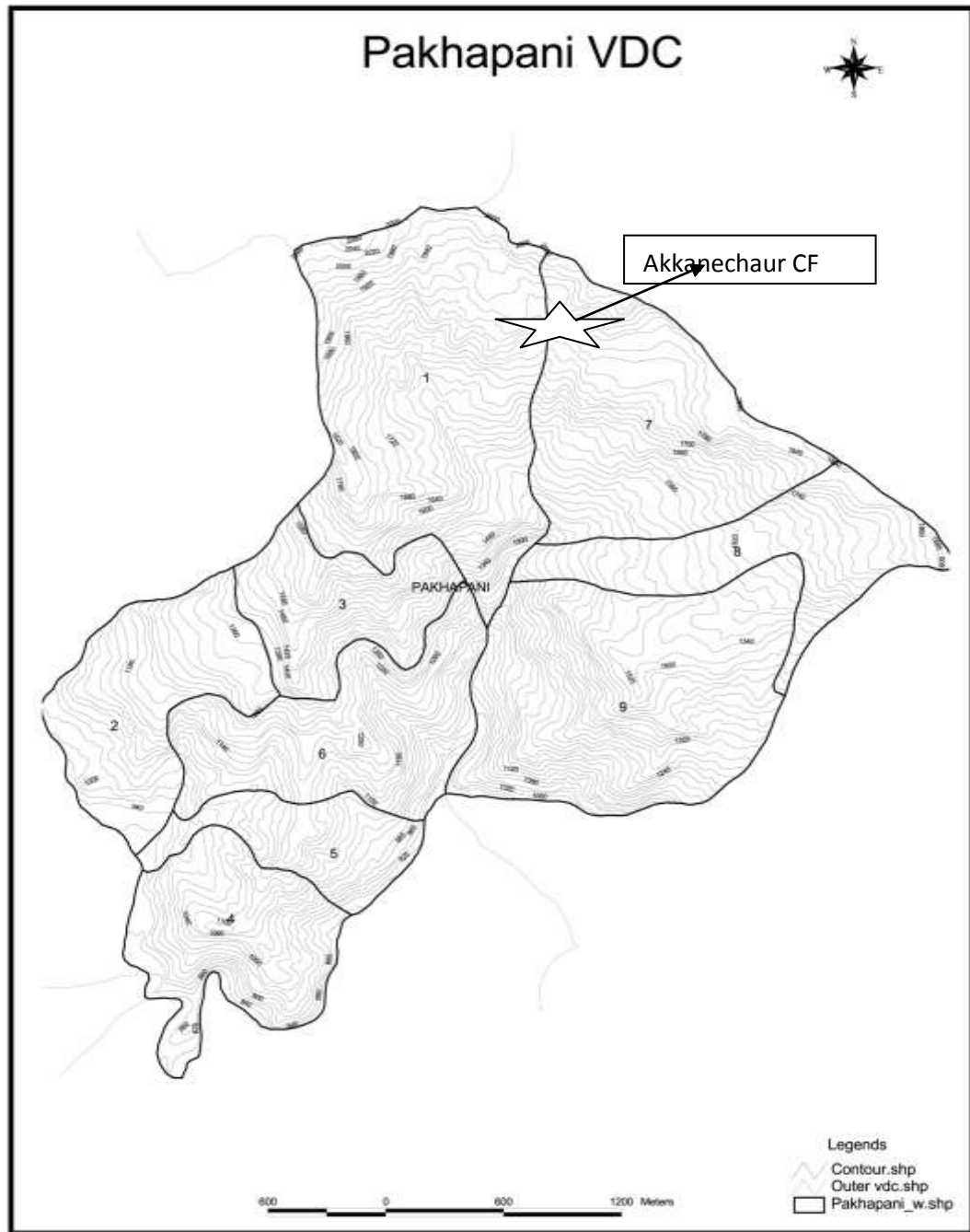


Figure :4 Location Map of Pakhapani VDC, Parbat



CHAPTER-SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, draws conclusion about women's participation in community forest management and provides recommendations to make women more active in forest management for the concerned stakeholders. Summary mainly focuses on the objectives and methods of the study. Conclusion section attempts to synthesize the results of specific objectives. Similarly, the recommendation part consists of some fundamental recommendations to the immediate stakeholders of the CFUG.

6.1 Summary

The study 'Women's Participation in Community Forest Management' was conducted in community forest of Pakhapani VDC of Parbat District aiming to assess the status of women's participation in community forest management at the study area. Among the total user's, 89 households were surveyed. The study was carried out some sequential steps of research methodology such as defining research problem, reviewing literature, and designing research, collecting data, analyzing data, interpreting data and reporting.

The study has revealed a marked change in living standards of people who are actively engaged in the community forest management. While looking towards the women's side, only few of them are found to have raised their living standard. The general condition of the lower-caste is found very poor. Some exceptional women have been found contribution in decision-making process to a certain level. In the case of lower-caste women, the situation is quite different.

It has also been revealed that the time spent by women in their daily works was closely related to demographic socio-economic factors such as family size, ratio of adult men and family income. Cultural variation has strongly influenced the time allocation pattern and control of resources. There appears a structured inequality between men and women over the productive resources and benefits.

The men seem far ahead in having exclusive access to fixed property and to return the land rights. Likewise, they have made better access to cash earning as well. However, the control of men over the resources appears influenced by the decision made by women especially in the farming system.

Major Findings of the Study:

- Participation of female as well as far of the lower, marginalized castes and the poor users in the General Assemblies and meetings seemed very low in comparison to males.
- Rural economics is based on agriculture. Agriculture and service/wages are the main occupation of sampled respondents. Field survey shows the majority of women respondents' members (51 percent) are engaged in agriculture. Similarly service/wages holders are 31 percent, only 4 percent are engaged in business, 8 percent are engaged in animal husbandry and out of 89 women respondents only 2 percent are engaged in teaching.
- Women are main collectors of fuel wood, fodder and leaf-litters. However, this work is getting harder and more time consuming due to ecological degradation.
- Out of 46 percent of women respondents were illiterate in the study area.
- Every woman spent a great deal of her time with numerous responsibilities relating to household chores.
- Many women think that as they are uneducated, their presence in the community meeting and assembly is useless. This hesitation has also contributed in making women's participation low.
- Due to lack of self-confidence of the women's user, they generally do not express their views in the forum of the meeting.
- Social and cultural practices, customs and traditions are the greatest factor that restricts women's mobility. Many families disapprove of their women going away from home to participation in CF activities, training and work.

- Lack of awareness among the women themselves and insufficient awareness programme by the donor's agencies and the government to involve women in CF management has also hindered women's participation in CF activities.
- Due to gender's work differences and interests within the same products in society, it has been necessary to address gender issues. Without addressing gender issues in the plan and programme, it is very difficult to launch development strategy for the upliftment of the society.
- The absence of obligatory rules (except for the quota requirement of women in the committee) is also a factor that has not promoted the women's participation in CF activities.
- Majority of sampled respondents are holding less than one Six Ropani (44 percent).
- Out of 85 percent users have food sufficient for less than 10 months consumption.
- Only 8 percent women are found involved in constitution preparation meetings. Majority of women (58 percent) not found participating in any programs.
- Women's participation is passive in executive committee and general assembly meetings.
- Out of 10 percent women respondents put their agenda occasionally, 8 percent respondents put their agenda frequently but 82 percent women respondents have not any idea.
- Out of 69 percent women respondents are living in nuclear small family and 31 percent are living in big family.
- In total 9 respondents female are in 20-30 years age groups and only 10 female are above 60 years old. Majority of respondents age group 41-50 (40 percent) years old.

- Majority of the houses (42 percent) were consists of Pakki, 20 percent houses were found Semi-Pakki and 38 percent followed by Kacchi houses in sampled respondents.
- In total 40 percent respondents received leadership training, 22 percent received literacy training, and 21 percent respondents received health training. Leadership training receiving female are maximum in number.
- Out of 42 percent of respondents have self become the member of the CFUG, 8 percent of respondents said that they are involved in the community forest because the friend encouraged them become the member of the CFUG.
- Only 1 percent women respondents are found to have been unmarried and the rest of all are married in the sampled respondents.

6.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.2.1 Conclusion

The study shows that community forest in Parbat District of Nepal brought remarkable change in the lifestyle of the people. They also had started some program to uplift the living standard of the people. But the programs were not focused on the specific issue of the women and poor. It has been also found out that there is a vast difference in time based work distribution pattern of men and women. Men have more leisure time than women. Field observation shows that most of the women are busy the whole day in doing productive as well as reproductive work. Most of them were involved in vegetable farming, animal husbandry, farming and labour work. Due to this women are having no leisure time, while men are only busy in productive work.

Findings of the study show that women can play a significant role in community forest management, protection and development. Hence, success of the CFUGs largely depends upon degree of women's participation in its management from the very beginning. Women's participation in CF management is greatly determined by various factors like bio-physical situation of CF, socio-economic and cultural practices, institutional culture of the EC, government's forestry policy, extension efforts of forestry organizations, perception and altitude towards CF and allied issues

and status of women in the family and society. Women's participation as executive committee members and their presence in regular meeting are found not satisfactory and their participation in discussion-making is found passive. Participation of ordinary women is found very low in decision-making process, due to deep-rooted patriarchal domination in the society.

Participation of women in implementation process is found high. Male's influences in decision making in the family, requirements of forest productions to women and tendency of giving less response to social works, prevailed in the community are the reasons for it. In aggregate, participation of sexes in monitoring and evaluation process is found poor in the CFUG. Particularly, women's participation has been observed rather poor in M & E aspect, due to lack of strong provision of regular monitoring and evaluation in the operational plans of CFUG, lack of knowledge on women in this regard.

In case of benefit sharing from social and development activities implemented by FUG, access of both sexes was found almost equal in the study. But there was lacking of women focused development activities. For the better involvement of women in community forest management human resource development activities should be launched effectively and sufficiently.

Women were motivated to participate in community forest management due to requirement of forest products, attachment with forest and women involved success stories carried out in different parts of the country. Similarly, women considered the self-inspiration, their neighbours, villagers, concerned EC, and forestry technician as potential sources of motivation to involve in CF management. Factors like regular household inadequate knowledge/skills, lack of compulsory provision regarding women involvement in legislation, patriarchal influence in the family and society and backbiting nature of society was found as hindering factors of women's participation in CF management.

Even today, two types of issues are outstanding regarding women's participation. First issue is quantitative aspect of women's involvement in different activities of CF management and second is qualitative (subjective) aspect of women's involvement, which is very difficult to analyze and interpret. Participation of more people in

community forest management itself is a big problem. In this context, involvement of women in equal proportion with male in dimensions of CF management is the burning issue of forest resource management.

6.2.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the results achieved from the study as per the aspirations of the local people from the community forestry. These recommendations will be fruitful for the further studies, policy makers, forest activist, development agencies and individuals.

Recommendation Related with Stakeholders

Community forest itself is a complex phenomenon, which is inter-related with various stakeholders in different steps and aspects of its management. The policy-makers, concerned EC and local governmental organization and non-governmental organization (GO/NGO) are major stakeholders of CF. Forestry policy is the apex body at national level that directs to constitution, strategy and implementation procedures formulation. Therefore, recommendations are provided to the major stakeholders to boost up women's participation in CF management as follows:

- A mandatory provision should be formulated ensuring at least equal and proportional participation of women in executive committee, which leads to compulsory participation of women. The constitution should assure provision of quota system for the time being (at least 10 years). By doing this automatically EC member could get minimum education on CF and environment so that they could motivate the peer groups.
- Being a corporate body the FUG should be empowered to develop operational plans independently. An intensive intervention of forestry technicians during OP preparation needs.
- FUGs should be reviewed, categorized and awarded based on their performance. Among various parameter peoples participation especially the women's participation should be the main. For the time being, all women groups should be reviewed and awarded separately.

- A special meeting of all women FUGs should be arranged annually at district level. Strength and weakness of such groups should be explored and shared among concerned agencies. By doing this, at least rest of the groups of the same district could be aware of such issues.

Recommendations to Respective FUGs

FUG is a corporate body that is authorized regarding operational plan preparation, forest resource distribution and CF management as a whole. In this context, FUG has a crucial role in policy formulation at local level and user mobilization. Some recommendations related to FUG are as follows:

- Despite the lack of provision of quota system at national level, FUGs seen to manage quota system at local level and key positions such as Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurers should be assigned to women such type of practice helps to boost up knowledge, moral and feeling of responsibility among women that ultimately will increase women's participation.
- The FUGs should organize an orientation program on periodic basis, targeting the general users. Provision of women's equal participations should be developed to that women could be made aware policy, constitution, OP, regulations of respective CF.
- A gender sensitizing should be organized at village to minimize the feeling of misconception regarding women's involvement and their leadership in development process. Other trainings such as leadership development, time management, community development, income generation etc. should be organized. Number of women participant should be increased in trainings, workshops and exposure visits to be carried out by the FUG, Range post and District forestry office for widening the range of thinking of women.
- A self-explanatory operational plan should be prepared in the spirit of current five-year OP. On the other hand, OP should be prepared with equal presence of both sexes and maximum number of users, which should be thoroughly disseminated and discussed among general users.
- Women are the real users of the forest resources and immediate victims of deforestation. Therefore, community forest activities should be lunched with

timely consigns and voluntary participation of women at all stages of the CF management.

- Income received from the CF should be invested on those activities, which could make benefited to women and disadvantaged groups so that these groups utilize fruit of CF and inspire to participation in CF management.

Recommendations to GOs/NGOs

The GOs/NGOs lurching in the FUG are to play a catalytic role in the community. Those projects bridge the gap directly between policy and community level. In those circumstances GOs/NGOs have a vital role in supporting and sensitizing the users. Major recommendations related to development agencies are as follows:

- These organizations should provide facilitation support to FUG member to improve women's participation in CF development and management.
- Women who are devoting seriously to community forest development and management activities, they should be recognized publicity. An ample example of women participation in CF management should be disseminated through mass media. Such types of recognition definitely maximize conservation thinking and practices among other users.

Recommendations for Future Studies

- Further researchers in different activities of community forest practices should be carried out to find the degree of involvement of women and to suggest possible measures to encourage their participation.
- Sustainable development of forest requires to be under taken, which assumes not only new planting of forests, but also other actions. They are deducing more productive and steady tree species, sowing useful plants between trees, increase the value of used forests, carrying out of ecologically correct more effective and less polluting techniques of tree feeling, using forest products: herbs, dyes timbers and encourage the use of a forest to causes it minimal harm, such as in ecological tourism.

- A strong recommendation forwarded to carry out in-depth study on valuation of women's participation especially in CF management to explore tangible as well as intangible contribution of women in respective discipline.
- Alternative livelihood activities should be made available to rural people to reduce their dependency on forest resource. In addition, effective public awareness programmes about forest conservation and importance needs to be initiated through different communication media and adoption of curriculum in school. Research should be carried out for designing effective public awareness programmes.

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APPENDICES

Annex-1: NAME OF THE RESPONDENTS OF HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

1. Dalli Darji	26. Pabi Gurung
2. Sarada Darji	27. Ikimaya Gurung
3. Harikala Sunar	28. Basna Gurung
4. Dalli Sunar	29. Jamuna Gurung
5. MinKumari Gurung	30. ChandraKumari Chhetri
6. Parbati Gurung	31. PremKumari Chhetri
7. Maina Gurung	32. Kopila Chhetri
8. Tarphi Gurung	33. Deurupa Chhetri
9. IndraKumari Gurung	34. Narayani Chhetri
10. JitaKumari Gurung	35. Gaumati Chhetri
11. RitaKumari Gurung	36. Narbada Chhetri
12. Keshmaya Gurung	37. Dilmaya Chhetri
13. Bishnudevi Gurung	38. Laxmi Chhetri
14. MinaKumari Gurung	39. LaxmiKumari Chhetri
15. Devi Gurung	40. Manmaya Chhetri
16. Gaumati B.K.	41. Deurupa Chhetri
17. SuntaKumari Gurung	42. Batuli Chhetri
18. Tulki B.K.	43. Chandrakala Adhikari
19. ManKumari B.K.	44. ThamKumari Adhikari
20. Radhika B.K.	45. Sita Adhikari
21. Devi B.K.	46. Batuli Adhikari
22. Sunita B.K.	47. Kopila Adhikari
23. Manbhuja B.K.	48. Nandakali Adhikari
24. BishnuKumari Gurung	49. IndraKumari Adhikari
25. Maya Gurung	50. NetraKumari Adhikari

51. Bhagabati Adhikari	71. Mandhri B.K.
52. PurnaKumari Adhikari	72. Bani B.K.
53. NandaKumari Paudel	73. Kumari B.K.
54. Sunmaya Nepali	74. RammayaGurung
55. Kumari Nepali	75. Chaumaya Gurung
56. Pabitra Nepali	76. Guma Gurung
57. Mandhari Nepali	77. Leshmaya Gurung
58. Batti Nepali	78. Gaurimaya Gurung
59. Bhimmaya Nepali	79. Nanumaya Gurung
60. Narmaya Nepali	80. Maya Gurung
61. Sukmaya Nepali	81. Sita Chhetri
62. Lalsuba Nepali	82. Harimaya Chhetri
63. Sita Nepali	83. Panu Gurung
64. Laxmi Nepali	84. Aiti Gurung
65. Khaisara Nepali	85. Asari Gurung
66. Kopila Nepali	86. Laxmi Gurung
67. Mina Nepali	87. Kumari Gurung
68. Manju Nepali	88. Bindu Gurung
69. Aaumaya Gurung	89. Jasu Gurung
70. Harimaya Gurung	

Annex-2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Education:
 - Illiterate
 - Literate
 - Primary
 - Up to S. L. C.
 - Above S. L. C.
4. Sex:
 - Female
5. Ethnicity:
 - Brahmin
 - Chhetri
 - Tharu
 - Magar
 - Dalit
 - Pun
 - Newar
6. Marital Status:
 - Married
 - Unmarried
7. Family Structure
 - Small
 - Joint
 - Big
8. Mention the family members of your family:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Total
9. Assets/Property:
 - Yes
 - No

10. Do you have own land?

- Yes
- No

11. Have you taken other's land for share cropping?

- Yes
- No

12. Is your farm production sufficient for the year round?

- Yes
- No

If not sufficient, how many months does it last?

13. Do you have cattle?

- Yes
- No

If yes please provide information:

Name	No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name	No.
Buffalo(S)		Buffalo(H)		Pig		Others	
Cow		Ox		Horse			
Goat		Calf		Sheep			

14. Do you have a house?

- Yes
- No

15. Types of house:

- Pakki
- Kacchi

Skill:

16. Have you got training from any institution?

- Yes
- No

If yes what type of training did you get?

- Literacy
- Health

- Leadership
- Saving and Credit
- Sewing and Cutting
- Others

17. Are you member of C.F.U.G.?

- Yes
- No

If yes general or executive member

- General
- Executive

18. What is the main reason for your involvement with C.F.U.G.?

- Poor economic situation
- To be self reliant
- To support the family
- All the above

19. What is the vision of your to look C.F.?

- Positive
- Negative
- Neutral

20. What is the role of women in forest management?

- Good
- Better
- Worse
- Nothing

21. Do you use to involve in implementation part of CF management?

- Yes
- No

If yes how?

- Plantation
- Thinking
- Bush clearing
- Product collection

- Others
22. What do you feel about community forest?
- Positive
 - Negative
23. First who encouraged you to be a member of C.F.U.G.?
- Self
 - Neighbour
 - Parent
 - Husband
 - Friend
 - Other
24. Do you know about general assembly?
- Yes
 - No
25. Have you put any agenda in the meetings?
- Occasionally
 - Frequently
 - NO Idea
26. For what purpose the resources of C.F.U.G. are utilized?
- Education
 - Health
 - Road/Drinking water/Electricity
27. What do you suggest to accelerate the participation of women in community forest management?
- Training
 - Empowerment
 - Skill Enhancement
28. Who established this C.F.U.G.?
- Government
 - VDC
 - All users
 - Male members of the community
 - Don't know

29. Are you facing any problems to involve in CF management?

- Yes
- No

If yes, specify the problems:

- Individual problems
- Problems related to family members
- Social problems
- Legal problems
- Other

30. Does C.F.U.G. have any special focus to women empowerment?

- Yes
- No

Annex-3: CHECKLIST FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

1. How was the forest situation before/after the establishment of CF?
2. How many women are there in the FUG committee?
3. How many women are participating in planning and decision-making process in FUG?
4. What type of activities are conducted to increase women's participation in planning and decision-making process of CF development at Ekane Chaur Forest Users Group?
5. How can we increase women's participation in planning and decision-making process of CF development?
6. Which factors motivate women to participate in forest management activities?
7. If females have no participation in CF, what are the reasons?
8. If someone destroyed the forest illegally, what types of punishment will be given?
9. How to collect and generate the fund?

Annex-4: NAME OF THE KEY INFORMANTS OF THE STUDY

S.N.	Name of Key InformantS	Status
1.	Tularam Gurung	Local Leader
2.	Hari Gurung	Social-Worker
3.	Laxmi Nepali	Member of CFUG
4.	Manmaya Gurung	Member of CFUG
5.	Danu Gurung	Businessman
6.	Dammar Bdr. Gurung	Teacher
7.	Narahari Sharma	Teacher

Annex-5: CHECKLIST FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

1. What is your contribution for your CF management?
2. What types of benefit did you get from your CF?
3. Did you participate to make constitution and OP?
4. Who collects firewood/fodder/leaf-litters from your family?
5. Who selects executive member for your FUG committee?
6. What is the process of benefits sharing resources utilization system in your CF?
7. Did you get chance to be participate in training, seminar from your CF?
8. How did you motivated in CF management?
9. Do you have any obstacles to participate in CF management? If yes, what are the obstacles?
10. What type of forest management activities do you perform in your CF?
11. Have you gone to participate FUG meeting?

**Annex-6: NAME OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER OF
EKKANE CHAUR COMMUNITY FOREST USER'S GROUP**

S.N.	Name	Designation	Sex
1.	Jojindra Bdr. Gurung	Chairman	Male
2.	Damber Bdr. Gurung	Vice-Chairman	Male
3.	Dhanu Maya Gurung	Secretary	Female
4.	Prakash Adhikari	Deputy Secretary	Male
5.	Bhoj Bdr. Chhetri	Treasurer	Male
6.	Om Bdr. Gurung	Member	Male
7.	Chau Maya Gurung	Member	Female
8.	Mina Nepali	Member	Female
9.	Sangita Sdhikari	Member	Female
10.	Jita Kumari Gurung	Member	Female
11.	Manmaya Gurung	Member	Female
12.	Nanda Kumari B.K.	Member	Female
13.	Tul Bdr. Gurung	Member	Male
14.	Lem Bdr. Gurung	Member	Male

Annex-7: CHECKLIST FOR FIELD OBSERVATION

1. Situation of CF's patches (closer/far) from the settlement.
2. Forest's Physical situation (bio-diversity, canopy, regeneration, forest protection).
3. Environmental status of the CF.
4. Participation of women during EC meeting.
5. Participation of women during forest products harvesting, transportation, Ban Heralu.